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THE ETHICS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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THE ETHICS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

By

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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PREFACE

There are at least two ways of treating such a subject as the Ethics of the Old Testament. One might take each of the branches or topics into which it is divisible in their order and trace the ideas concerning them held or taught at one time or another by the Hebrews. The several topics could thus be given perfect distinctness and the progress of thought with reference to them could be made convincingly apparent. There would, however, be this disadvantage, that the ideas discussed would in the process detach themselves, not only from one another, but from their exponents, and thus lose more or less in reality and interest for the average reader. In this book I have sought to prevent such a result by adopting the method of discussing the whole subject, with its various branches, in a succession of stages and especially as illustrated in the conduct or teaching of representative Hebrews. Anyone who wishes a comprehensive view of a particular topic, can obtain it by simply piecing together my findings thereon in the successive chapters.

I leave it to the reader, also, to define for himself the ethical significance of the Old Testament as a whole in the light of these findings, suggesting only that while it can evidently no longer be regarded as "peculiar" for "the completeness and consistency of its morality," and therefore infallible, its surpassing importance as a record of the moral development of the Hebrews and a means of stimulation to, and instruction in, right conduct must always be recognized.

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In the Introduction I discuss the sources, that is, the books of the Old Testament, in the order in which they appear in the Hebrew Bible. When I proceed to use them for the purpose in hand, I take them, sometimes in parts, as far as possible in chronological order. There are cases in which I have found it impossible to follow this plan, the most exceptional being that of the Book of Psalms, which, although it doubtless contains some much earlier pieces, has others that are as late as any other book in the Hebrew canon. I have therefore discussed it by itself as a whole in the closing chapter.

A word should be said about the quotations from the Scriptures. They will not always sound familiar. The explanation is that, when I have quoted, I have generally followed the American Revision, but I have sometimes changed it where I found it unsatisfactory, and sometimes made my own translation or adopted one made by a recognized scholar. In no case have I taken such liberty without good authority for the rendering preferred. The passages that seemed to require correction are included in the list of those specially discussed in the second index.

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INTRODUCTION

The Ethics of the Old Testament has always been a perplexing and formidable subject. It is still difficult, but the difficulties that now present themselves are not so serious as they once seemed. Thus, the thoughtful reader of Genesis can explain the fact that in 9:20 ff. Canaan is cursed for an offense of which, not he, but his father, has been guilty; also how it is that in Josh. 7:24 f. the children of Achan have to suffer with him, although, according to Deut. 24:16, Moses has just ordained that "the fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers." In these and many other instances criticism has shown that we have to do, not with a homogeneous text, but with the work of two or more authors writing at different times and from different standpoints. The critics, however, although they have solved many such difficulties and made a scientific study of the Old Testament possible, have added to the complexity of any general problem by showing that, not only the Hexateuch, but various other books, are of composite origin and that there are few in the collection that have not been revised and enlarged since they were written. It will therefore be necessary briefly to review their findings before entering upon the discussion of the proper subject of this volume.

The critical analysis of the Old Testament naturally began with the Pentateuch. Various hypotheses were proposed and abandoned. The one that is now most

generally accepted is to the effect that the first five books were compiled from four main sources, the earliest being a Judean writing (J) of the reign of Jehoshaphat (878–843 B.C.), and the next in age an Ephraimite work (E) of the reign of Jeroboam II (785–745 B.C.). These two were in process of time wrought into a composite production; but not before 650 B.C., when both of them had received considerable additions by later hands. Meanwhile, in the reign of Manasseh (680–640 B.C.), there had been produced a third work, a form of Deuteronomy (D), which, when published in 621 B.C., became the program for the reforms undertaken by the then king Josiah. It was added to the previous compilation early in the Exile (586–538 B.C.). Finally, during and after the Exile a school of priestly writers (P), from materials new and old, composed a fourth writing, which Ezra in 458 B.C. brought with him from Babylon and, with the help of Nehemiah, persuaded the Jews to accept, either alone or as a part of the practically completed Pentateuch, in 444 B.C., as the Law of God. If it was not then united with the earlier works, it must have been incorporated with them before 400 B.C. The bearing of this theory is evident. If the Pentateuch is not the work of Moses, but the product of a later process of development lasting until the middle or end of the fifth century B.C., it loses some, at least, of the value it has been supposed to have as a source of knowledge concerning the patriarchal age. On the other hand, however—and this should never be forgotten—it acquires a new importance as a mirror of thought and practice among the Hebrews of the later centuries.

The Jews treated the first five books of their Scriptures as a group by themselves. The second division consisted of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, which they called "The Former Prophets."

The Book of Joshua is largely composed of the same elements as the Pentateuch, to which a form of it was originally attached. The source D is the only one that is not represented, and its place is supplied by additions and modifications in J and E by an exilic editor under the influence of Deuteronomy.

The Priestly story closed with the occupation of Canaan. Not so the Judean and Ephraimite narratives. They both went through the Heroic Period of Hebrew history, and many hold that the Book of Judges is largely composed of extracts from these two sources. It was re-edited during the Exile, when 1:1—2:5, 9:1—10:5, 12:8–15, 17–21, and perhaps chap. 16, in their original forms, were omitted; but these parts were restored by a still later editor.

In the Books of Samuel, originally reckoned as one, the hand of the Deuteronomic editor seldom appears, the first part, and the first chapter of the second, being mostly a compilation from J and E, and the rest of the second part consisting almost entirely of extracts from the former of these two sources. The psalms in I Sam., chap. 2, and II Sam., chap. 22, however, are late additions.

The Books of Kings, too, which were also originally one, were compiled from various sources, among which some find J and E as well as the annals of Solomon (I Kings 11:41) and the more frequently mentioned chronicles of the kings of Judah (I Kings 14:29) and

Israel (I Kings 14:19).[1] In its present form it shows traces of a twofold Deuteronomic redaction, one before, and the other during, the Exile. There are also, as in the case of the Books of Samuel, some later additions.

In the Hebrew Scriptures "The Former Prophets" are followed by "The Later Prophets," that is, the prophetical books, properly so called, the first of which is Isaiah.

The distinction between a first and a second Isaiah is familiar to students of the Old Testament. The book that bears this name, however, has had a more complex history than these titles would indicate, for even in chaps. 1–39 there are not only briefer passages, but whole chapters, that are not of Isaian authorship. The most important are 2:2–4; 10:16–27; 11:10—12:6; 13:1—14:23; 15:1—16:12; 19; 21:1–15; 23–27; 29:16–24; 30:18–26; 32:1–8, 15–20, and 33–39. Some of these passages were added during the Exile, but more are of a still later date. The second part of the book can none of it be attributed to Isaiah, chaps. 40–55 having evidently been written toward the end of the Exile, and much, if not all, of the rest after the Restoration.

The Book of Jeremiah tells, in part, its own story. In chap. 36 it reports that in 605 B.C. the prophet was

[1] In the Greek version the substance of I Kings 8:12 f. is inserted after 8:53, and the quotation is followed by the statement, under the form of a question, that the words quoted are "written in the Book of Song." Wellhausen suggests that the Hebrew original of this statement had, not שִׁיר, "song," but יָשָׁר, "Jashar"; in other words, that here is another reference to the ancient collection of poems quoted by J in Josh. 10:13 and II Sam. 1:18. See Cornill, *Introduction*, 207 f.

directed to put the words that he had thus far spoken into writing, and that the next year, when the book prepared by his disciple Baruch had been burned by the king of Judah, he made a second copy, to which he added "many like words." The substance of these prophecies is doubtless contained in the book that bears his name, but they constitute only a part of its contents. In the first place, there are other prophecies of a later date that can safely be attributed to him. Secondly, there is a series of sections in which, not the discourses, but the experiences of the prophet are narrated in the third person. Finally, there are many brief passages, and some whole sections, that were evidently not added by Jeremiah himself or his disciple, but by later and, in some cases, much later writers. The extent to which this book has been enlarged in comparatively recent times appears from the fact that, according to Cornill, about an eighth of it is wanting in the Greek Version.

The Book of Ezekiel, unlike the two preceding, although it has suffered at the hands of transcribers, has not been enlarged except by occasional glosses, and therefore is substantially in the form given to it by its author.

The books of the Minor Prophets are not arranged in the order of their origin. Nor have they been preserved in their original forms. Hosea, one of the oldest, is also one of those that have suffered most, in the opinion of biblical critics, at the hands of revisers. Thus, in its title the date has apparently been copied in part from the first verse of Isaiah, and there are various other additions, most of which were intended to relieve the severity of the prophet's original discourses.

The Book of Joel, on the other hand, the date of which is not far from 400 B.C., seems to have been transmitted almost as it was written.

In Amos (760 B.C.), the oldest of all these shorter prophetical productions, there are certain passages that are regarded by many scholars as accretions. The most important is 9:8*b*–15, but the removal of all of these verses only renders the teaching of the prophet more consistent and forcible.

The Book of Obadiah, although it is the briefest in the Old Testament, has not escaped the notice of the reviser. Indeed, there are those who claim that only about half of it can be attributed to the original author, a prophet of the first half of the fifth century before the Christian era.

The Book of Jonah is not properly a prophetical work, but a parable in the historical form, later than the time of Nehemiah, into which a still later psalm of unknown origin, 2:1–10, has been inserted.

Micah presents a problem to which, as yet, there is no generally accepted solution. The first three chapters, with the exception of three or four verses, may safely be attributed to the traditional author, a younger contemporary of Isaiah, and less confidently a few verses of chaps. 4 and 5. If 6:1—7:6 is genuine, as is still maintained, it must have been written at a later date. Among the interpolated passages is a brilliant picture of the messianic era, 4:1–4, which is found in a briefer form in the second chapter of Isaiah. The other additions are of the same encouraging character.

The prophecies of Nahum have been preserved in substantially their original form, but the psalm, found

in 1:2–8, 12 f., 15, and 2:2, which has been prefixed to them must have been composed long after the fall of Nineveh.

The prophecies of Habakkuk, also, seem originally to have been directed against Nineveh, but by the removal of 1:5–11 from its proper place after 2:4 it was made to appear that the Chaldeans were the offending nation. At the end of the book is a later psalm, taken from a collection otherwise unknown, extolling Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews.

The prophet Zephaniah preceded both Nahum and Habakkuk, but some parts of the book that bears his name have been referred to a later date. The most important are 2:8–11 and 3:14–20, neither of which can have been written before the Exile.

The prophecies of Haggai, delivered in 520 B.C., were intended to encourage his people. Hence it was not necessary to revise or supplement them in order to adapt them to the needs of later generations. In point of fact, they have not undergone changes of any importance.

The same can be said of the first eight chapters of the Book of Zechariah; but the last six chapters are considerably later, having been written by at least four different persons during the Greek period.

The Book of Malachi is entirely a product of the critical period immediately preceding the introduction of the Priestly legislation.

The fourth, and last, division in the Hebrew Scriptures is that of "The Writings," or, as the Greeks called them, "The Hagiographa."

The first of these sacred writings is the Book of the Psalms, which consists of five parts corresponding to the five books of the Pentateuch. Many (73) of the pieces composing the book are attributed to David, but the titles are untrustworthy and lack the support of either external or internal evidence. Indeed, such evidence as there is indicates that most, if not all, of the psalms are of post-exilic origin and some of them as late as the Maccabean period.

The Book of Proverbs, like that of the Psalms, is evidently the product of a gradual compilation. It contains two principal and four supplementary collections, with distinct titles, to which is prefixed a dissertation on Wisdom. The general title, 1:1, makes Solomon the author of the whole book, but it is contradicted by some of the subtitles; for, although 10:1—22:16, 25:1—29:27 are attributed to the great king, 22:17—24:22 and 24:23–34 are entitled "The Words of the Wise," while chap. 30 contains "The Words of Agur the son of Jakeh," and chap. 31, in part, "The Words of King Lemuel." The internal evidence, the style of thought and expression, warrants one in going farther and questioning whether any part of the book was actually written by Solomon. The tendency is to bring the oldest down into the fourth century before Christ, and the rest to various dates in the Greek period.

In the Book of Job there must be distinguished a story of the patriarch, found in the framework, which was current among the Hebrews before the Exile,[1] and the great poem founded upon it. The date of the latter, which can only be determined by internal evidence, is

[1] Ezek. 14:14, 20.

plausibly fixed at about the middle of the fifth century before the Christian era, but the speeches of Elihu in chaps. 32–37 may be somewhat later.

The Song of Solomon is not, as has been supposed, a literary unit, but a collection of songs such as were sung by the Hebrews during the celebration of their weddings, when the bridegroom was king, and the bride queen, of the revels. Indeed, he was hailed as Solomon,[1] while she, for the time being the fairest of women, was called "the Shulamite,"[2] after the damsel who ministered to David in his last days.[3] The name Solomon, therefore, is of no value as evidence of the date of the book, which, since it shows traces of Greek as well as Persian influence, can hardly have been composed before the time of Alexander.

The Book of Ruth purports to be a story from the period of the Judges, but it is without doubt a fictitious narrative written, in protest against the exclusiveness represented by Ezra, about 450 B.C.

The Book of Lamentations, though not written, as was formerly believed, by Jeremiah, was composed, in part at least, soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, and completed before the end of the Exile.

Ecclesiastes, so far from being a work of Solomon, is a pseudograph which is supposed to have been written rather early in the Greek period, perhaps about 250 B.C. It therefore mirrors the result of a hospitable attitude toward things foreign, while the Book of Esther, the latest of the Hagiographa, voices the fanatical hatred and contempt with which the Jews regarded

[1] Cant. 3:7 ff.

[2] Cant. 6:13.

[3] I Kings 1:3 f.

other peoples after they had achieved their independence under the Maccabees.

The date of Daniel is 164 B.C., when the Jews, although they had cleansed the sanctuary, were still beset on all sides by enemies and were in dire need of inspiration and encouragement.

The last four books of the Hebrew canon were originally one work, the order then being, Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. The date of the compiler is about 300 B.C., but he copied freely from the books of Samuel and Kings and sometimes made use of earlier authorities. In that part of his narrative devoted to the Restoration he seems to have copied largely from the personal memoirs of the two leaders.

It is clear from the above analysis that the contents of the Old Testament are not arranged in the order of their origin. But it is equally clear that, if one would get a comprehensive view of their teaching on any subject, they must be studied in their chronological relations. This, therefore, will be the method adopted in the following pages.

CHAPTER I

THE HEBREW POINT OF VIEW

The discussion of the contents of the Old Testament in chronological order makes possible a connected historical survey of their ethical teachings, but before such a study is undertaken, it will be best to consider briefly the attitude of the Hebrews with reference to ethics in general.

In the first place, it is taken for granted by their literary representatives that man is a moral being. There is only one passage, and that a comparatively early one, in which the subject is discussed, namely Gen., chap. 3. This remarkable story teaches that man was not originally endowed with the faculty for making ethical distinctions. It is based on the idea that childhood is the ideal state, and that, therefore, Yahweh, although he was obliged to give the first human beings fully developed bodies, withheld the gift that would have made them independent, in a sense, and morally responsible. They are reported to have acquired the missing faculty, not as a subsequent divine endowment or natural development, but through the magical influence of a tree of which, although he had planted it "in the midst of the garden," he had forbidden them to eat the fruit. They were punished for disobeying him by being made thenceforth subject to toil, pain, and death; but he did not deprive them of the new power that they had acquired, which thus, like the penalties decreed, became the heritage of the human race.

There are no references or allusions to this story by later writers in the Old Testament. They might have cited it to justify God's severity toward peoples other than the Hebrews, whom, these writers taught, he held responsible for their conduct, in spite of the fact that they had no direct and express revelation to guide or warn them. The best illustrations of this doctrine are found in the prophecies of Amos, who, in his first two chapters, arraigns the peoples surrounding the Hebrews one after another and condemns them for the violation, not of distinct divine commands, but of the instinctive dictates of humanity. It is possible that Amos, in 2:9 ff., intended to accuse Israel also of universally recognized offenses, but this is not his whole meaning. The Hebrews claimed to stand in a peculiar relation to Yahweh, a relation so close that they were not obliged to rely on their own wisdom, but, when uncertain which course to follow, might hear a voice saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it."[1] They believed that he had often spoken to the fathers in this way, and that, when their ears became dull, he had still continued to speak to them through his prophets. In 2:11 Amos reminds Israel of the prophets that have arisen among them. When, therefore, he condemns them, it is for disobeying the voice of Yahweh as well as their own best impulses.

In view of what has just been said it is not surprising that, in Isa. 30:20, Yahweh should be called his people's "Teacher,"[2] and in the same connection the words of

[1] Isa. 30:21.

[2] The Hebrew word is plural in form, and is so rendered in the English Version, but the construction shows that here, as in 54:5

the prophets be denominated his "teaching," or, as the English Version has it, his "law."[1] Nor is this all. In process of time not only the ethical precepts of the prophets, but the legal precedents and the ceremonial prescriptions inherited from the past, were brought under the same category. Thus in II Kings 22:8 the term "law" is applied to Deuteronomy, and in Neh. 8:2 ff. to the entire legislation of the Pentateuch. In other words, the entire life of the Hebrews, personal and social, was finally viewed and regulated from the religious standpoint.

From this standpoint the law of good-will assumes a peculiar character and importance. It is a fundamental principle of ethics that the quality of an act depends upon the attitude of the will with reference to it. If the given act is approved by the ethical judgment, the will should at once require its performance; but, if, on the other hand, it is condemned, the will should as promptly forbid its further contemplation. When these requirements are fulfilled, the result in either case is a certain satisfaction with one's self and expectation of approval by one's fellows. Indeed, the will is recognized as so important a factor in such matters that one is not generally given credit for doing right unless one chooses the right as right and shuns the wrong as wrong; and, on the other hand, one is not condemned, if, choosing the right, one is led to do that which is wrong through a mistake of judgment. The Hebrews recognized this principle, and their Scriptures furnish some good examples of its application. Thus, in the story

("thy Maker"), the descriptive participle really denotes a single individual, and that the Deity.

[1] Vs. 9.

of the seizure of Sarah by Abimelech,[1] when God warns the king of the danger to which he has exposed himself by appropriating Abraham's wife, Abimelech replies, "Wilt thou slay even a righteous nation?"[2] supporting his protest by insisting that he has done what he has done in integrity of heart, that is, with an upright intention, and therefore with innocency of hands, that is, without incurring real guilt; and God admits his contention. There is another illustration of the principle in question in the law touching homicide. The earliest legislation required that the wilful murderer be summarily put to death, but prescribed that the man who killed another by accident be protected from the resentment of the relatives of his unintentional victim, and the later laws on the subject reaffirmed this distinction.[3] Thus far there seems to be nothing peculiar in the Hebrew idea and application of the law of good-will. When, however, one recalls that the law concerning murder is a part of a code that the Hebrews believed to have been dictated by God himself, it becomes clear that a violation of it could not but seem to them defiance of the Deity; and what is true of this law applies to every other least prescription referred to God in the Old Testament. On the other hand, obedience to these laws was interpreted as an expression of devotion and loyalty, not to an ideal or to other human beings, but to the divine Lawgiver.

[1] Gen., chap. 20.

[2] The word rendered "nation" might be dropped without injury to the sense, which would then be, "Wilt thou slay even a righteous man?"

[3] Exod. 21:13 f.; Deut. 19:1 ff.; Num. 35:10 ff.

The connection between ethics and religion among the Hebrews was strengthened by their belief in a peculiar relation between them and Yahweh. They did not, after the manner of other peoples, represent this relation as natural, but as voluntary, the result of a covenant solemnly ratified by both parties. They claimed that it was originally made with Abraham,[1] and renewed with Isaac[2] and Jacob,[3] and, finally, with the fugitive people descended from these patriarchs, at Sinai.[4] By it they were bound to exclusive devotion to Yahweh, and to certain observances which manifested and emphasized their adherence to him. These requirements, which were probably ten in number, are found in their earliest form in Exod., chap. 34. None of them were in themselves ethical in character, but, as the terms of a covenant, they acquired an ethical significance; that is, the fulfilment of them argued loyalty, and the disregard of them disloyalty, to an express agreement. So profoundly did the prophets feel this that they did not hesitate to speak of the worship of other gods, which was forbidden by the first article of the covenant, as adultery.[5] Naturally the neglect of any of the other articles was only less culpable. Thus, while the Hebrews seldom distinguished between ethics and religion, their religion, from an early date—how early it may not be possible to determine—was shot through with an ethical quality.

The form into which the Hebrews put the ideals by which they were led, also, was influenced by their idea

[1] Gen. 15:1 ff.
[2] Gen. 26:24.
[3] Gen. 28:13.
[4] Exod. 34:27.
[5] Hos. 1:2; Jer. 3:1; Ezek. 23:1 ff.

of God and his relation to them. This is illustrated in the story of the migration of Abraham. One might explain it as prompted by a spirit of adventure, or occasioned by a political upheaval such as occurred when the Kassites invaded Babylonia, but neither of these is the Hebrew view of the matter. The Judean narrative[1] says that it was suggested, or rather, commanded, by Yahweh, and that the patriarch was induced to undertake it by a promise from his God of a numerous and fortunate posterity. This ideal is represented as the lodestar, not only of Abraham, but of all the rest of the patriarchs. In process of time, as will appear, it was modified and enlarged, but it was always represented, not as a human conception, developed by experience and reflection, but as a divine plan and purpose, more and more clearly unfolded by his successive spokesmen. Naturally the sanctions by which these teachers sought to reinforce the influence of the ideals presented took a corresponding form. The good, submissive will, they assured their people, would be rewarded by the fulfilment of the inherited promise, but the evil, contrary will would be punished by misfortunes as dreadful as the blessings offered were attractive. The inducements to submission to the divine direction are repeatedly set forth in the Hebrew Scriptures, at greatest length in Deut., chap. 28, where the penalties for a contrary spirit are presented with even greater particularity. It should, however, be noted, that in only a few late passages[2] is there any indication that the rewards and penalties promised and threatened,

[1] Gen. 12:1 ff.

[2] Ps. 49:14 f.; 73:26; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2 f.

or any part of them, would be reserved for a future life.

The Hebrew ideas of God and duty, as above outlined, at first sight seem unobjectionable; for the theist must confess that, in the last analysis, the voice of duty is the voice of God, and also that the good will must inform and control the ideal life; but anyone who looks a little closely into the matter will be constrained to object that a system requiring that the good will manifest itself in certain ways prescribed for every phase of life was mistaken and possibly mischievous. The prophets early saw this and entered their protest. Thus Amos, strongly as he insisted upon justice and mercy and other moral qualities, refused to recognize the forms of religion practiced in his day as obligatory, and the greatest of his successors taught the same doctrine.[1] In 8:8 Jeremiah boldly accuses the scribes of wielding a "false pen," in other words, of inserting into the law requirements for which they had no authority from Yahweh; a remonstrance that reminds one of Peter's, when he said at the conference at Jerusalem, "Why make ye trial of God, by putting upon the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"[2]

It appears, then, that the Hebrews seldom distinguished between ethics and religion, but that, by a peculiar view of their relation to Yahweh, some of them gave an ethical significance to things indifferent. The distinction in question, however, exists, and, as for things indifferent, the great prophets warrant one in

[1] Isa. 1:10 ff.; Jer. 7:21 f.

[2] Acts 15:10.

treating them as such. In the following pages, therefore, the attempt will be made to discuss the teaching of the Hebrew Scriptures concerning man's duties to himself and to his fellows, whether in the smaller circle of the family or the larger one of society. The material for such a study is found in its purest form in the express precepts and regulations for the conduct of life in which the Old Testament abounds. The exhortations and denunciations of the prophets also contain a large ethical element that is of great interest and importance. The historical books, most of which were regarded as prophetical by the Hebrews, reveal the moral standards of their authors in the manner in which they treat the persons and events therein described. Finally, the so-called poetical books, as an expression of the inner life of their authors, furnish interesting data for the periods to which they belong. When the material thus gathered has been arranged in the order of its age, it should show whether, and to what extent, the Hebrews made progress, during the period covered by the Old Testament, in their ethical ideas and requirements.

CHAPTER II

THE LEGENDARY PERIOD

The way has now been cleared for an intelligent study of the ethical teaching of the Old Testament. The method proposed, as already intimated, is the historical one. In one period after another search is to be made for data on the subject, and the stage of progress of which these data give evidence determined.

The first period naturally extends from the origin of the race to the Flood, as described in the Book of Genesis. The chapters devoted to this period present a dramatic picture, relating how mankind, having acquired the capacity for knowing good from evil, instead of employing it in the development of moral character, neglected it to such an extent that they gradually deteriorated and finally became morally so offensive to their Maker that he destroyed them with the exception of a single family. If, now, these chapters were a homogeneous narrative, written in the period with which they deal or based on well-authenticated records or traditions, it would be a simple matter to learn and show how far mankind had then progressed in morals. This, however, is not the case. In the first place, the narrative is evidently composite, consisting of extracts from three distinct sources, with some editorial material; and, secondly, as has been stated in another connection, none of these sources, as a whole, can safely be dated earlier than the ninth century before the Christian era. The oldest is the

Judean narrative, which doubtless contained much that had existed in some form for an indefinite period. From it were taken Gen. 2:4b–7, 8 f.*, 16, 17*, 18–25; 3:1–19, 21, 23*; 4:1, 16b, 17*, 18–24; 5:29; 6:1 f., 4; 9:20 f., 22*, 23–25, 26*, 27.[1] These chapters, when read in their original order (with 9:20–27 after 5:29), present a picture of the primitive world, not, indeed, as it really was, but as the early Hebrews conceived it. It is a very different picture from that which one gets from the composite narrative. Cain, the great wrong-doer, has disappeared, and there is no deluge in it to emphasize the justice of the divine government. Man as a race is represented, not as being borne on a tide of passion and violence to an early and almost total destruction, but as boldly taking possession of the world in which he finds himself and attacking the secret of its adaptation to his comfort and advantage. Cain learns how to make the soil furnish him sustenance, Enoch, his son, how to protect himself with walls and battlements;[2] the three sons of Lemech open as many new avenues for human endeavor by domesticating the most useful animals, inventing instruments of music, and fashioning the metals into useful implements; and, finally, Noah adds wine as his contribution to the resources of the expanding race. The author of this story, although it is he to whom we are indebted for the account of the origin of the moral faculty in chap. 3, introduces these later incidents, not to point a moral,

[1] The asterisk (*) indicates that the verses thus marked have undergone material changes.

[2] The natural subject of the verb "builded" in 4:17 is Enoch; hence it must have been he who gave its name to the city, even "his own name, Enoch."

but, for their own sake, as items in the supposed history of civilization. He gives them, therefore, as they occur to him, almost without comment, letting the people who figure in them speak for themselves, and the reader draw his own conclusions. Still, it is possible, by carefully noting, not only what he says, but what he omits to say, to gather some idea of what he thought about the moral development of mankind before the time of Abraham.

The first incident to be considered, because it involves the question of personal morality, is that of Noah and Canaan in 9:20–27. Now, there can be no doubt that the author intended to represent the discovery of wine as beneficial to mankind. This is clear from the fact that it is introduced in terms that relate it to the achievements previously recorded; for 9:20 should be rendered, not as in the English Version, "And Noah began to be an husbandman, and [he] planted a vineyard," but "And Noah, the husbandman, planted the first vineyard"; but it is placed beyond question by 5:29, where the child Noah is hailed as the comforter of his race. It is also clear that Noah is not condemned for drinking to excess. The Judean writer could not consistently censure him, since in 43:34 he reports without a sign of disapproval that even Joseph and his brothers drank to intoxication. He does, however, condemn, and strongly, personal impurity; for Canaan, who, according to the original of the story, "saw the nakedness of his father," represents the Canaanites, whom Yahweh, on account of their notorious impurity, finally delivered into the hands of the children of Israel.[1]

[1] Judg. 1:1 ff.

There are two or three passages that should be noted as bearing on the ethics of the family in primitive times. The first is the account of the creation of woman, especially 2:24, which, at first sight, might be interpreted as teaching monogamy and the equality, at least, of the wife with her husband. This view, however, can hardly be maintained. That monogamy is not taught appears from the fact that the author does not show any sign of disapproval of Lemech for taking two wives, as he probably would have done, had he wished to prevent his readers from following the patriarch's example. As for the equality of woman, that would be inconsistent with the fact that he represents her as an afterthought of the Creator. The story of the sons of God and the daughters of men in 6:1 f. and 4, if it originally had its present significance, would have to be considered in this connection. It is evident, however, that the author of it had nothing to say with reference to the ethical character of the unions formed between the two classes, simply taking for granted, as most men did in ancient times, that such marriages had actually taken place and finding in them an explanation of the origin of the giants whose exploits were also universally accepted as historical facts.

The Judean narrative, as already noted, traces the organization of society to the time of Enoch, the builder of the first city. The social tendency in this primitive period, according to 11:1 ff., was so strong that Yahweh was obliged to intervene and confuse the speech of mankind to bring about their dispersion to the four quarters of the earth. There is only one passage in which reference is made to any law or custom by which

men were then governed in their relations with one another, namely, 4:3 f., where Lemech, in the first biblical lyric, celebrates his ability to avenge himself upon his enemies. His savage boast implies a crude sense of justice and the recognition of the law of retaliation, and the author seems not to have required or expected anything better of the period that he was describing. He does not object even to the ratio of seventy and seven to one, if the avenger is strong enough to exact it.

One point more deserves attention. It is matter of common knowledge among students of the Old Testament that the ideas of the early Hebrews on the subject of truth and falsehood were rather embryonic. This fact is recognized by translators and commentators, but some of them, in their desire to make it appear, do scant justice to the subtlety of either the serpent or the Judean narrator. Thus the revisers of the English Version have put into the mouth of the serpent the half-assertive question, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?" This, however, is certainly not the thought that the author intended to express. What God said was that man might eat of all the trees but one. To make the serpent flatly contradict him at the outset would have been a very clumsy expedient. It should be made to say, as the Hebrew is most naturally translated, not "any tree," but "all the trees," "of the garden"; this change of emphasis from the positive to the negative in the divine utterance being a device to mislead without lying that was worthy of "the most subtil of all the beasts of the field which Yahweh had made." The

same subtlety manifests itself in the serpent's reply to the explanation attempted by the woman. The first clause is translated, "Ye shall not surely die," as if it were a direct and absolute contradiction of the warning of 2:17. Here the translators have erred in that they have given to an ambiguous expression the same sense that it has in a different connection. The ambiguity is due to the use of a verbal construction,[1] denoting emphasis, for which there is no uniform rendering. Thus, in Gen. 43:7, where it occurs twice, the translation in the first instance is "asked straitly," and in the second, "could we in any wise know?" It is clear from these examples that the words rendered "Thou shalt surely die" might also mean "Thou shalt utterly die," "Thou shall immediately die," or anything else that might be expressed by the verb "die" with an appropriate modifier. Now, it is evident from the sequel that in 2:17 "die" means "become subject to death," and that, therefore, the phrase "in the day that" must not be taken too literally. This being the case, a better rendering for the whole clause would be, "If ever thou eat thereof, thou shalt die," which is sufficiently ambiguous without being positively misleading. The serpent, in its reply to the woman, takes advantage of the ambiguity of the construction employed to contradict what Yahweh did not assert, namely, that death would be the immediate effect of partaking of the fruit of the forbidden tree, cunningly calculating that she would not detect the fallacy. These may seem trivial distinctions, but they must not be overlooked, for they have important bearings. The same is true, from the

[1] The finite verb preceded by the so-called infinitive absolute.

literary standpoint, of the interpretation of vs. 10 according to which "the man hopes to escape complete exposure by acknowledging part of the truth" (Skinner), and the natural one, which is, that the man had been so occupied with the new faculty that he had not had time to reflect on the means by which he had acquired it. The author of the inimitable story cannot have failed to see that an artless reply was needed to give to this passage the greatest dramatic interest.

The Judean narrative was a work of the ninth century B.C. In the eighth century the section that has just been examined was enlarged by the addition of the story of Cain and Abel and the Yahwistic account of the Deluge. Thus, as will appear, a romance touched with genius was transformed into a sermon almost as openly didactic as a chapter from the Book of Amos. Still later, when the Priestly document was added to the previous compilation, the old story was again expanded, and thenceforth, in its framework of Jewish theology, could still less justly be regarded as a trustworthy record of the earliest period in human history.

CHAPTER III

THE PATRIARCHAL PERIOD

The second period in the history of the Hebrews, as they related it, extends from the general dispersion to the descent of Jacob and his family into Egypt. In this, as in the preceding period, it is the Judean narrative to which one must go for the most ancient and valuable data concerning it. This remarkable work is the source from which the legend with reference to the tower of Babel[1] was taken. The next extract from it is an account of Terah and his family.[2] It tells how Abram, a son of Terah, at the command of Yahweh, removed from Haran to Canaan, taking Lot with him,[3] and how, after they had separated,[4] Yahweh appeared to him and promised him a numerous and prosperous posterity, with Canaan for their inheritance.[5] Next, if it is genuine, should come the story of Abram's visit to Egypt,[6] followed by that of Hagar's flight[7] and his marriage with Keturah.[8] The visit of the angels to Mamre[9] belongs to this narrative, also most of the

[1] Gen. 11:1–9.

[2] Gen. 11:28 f., except "in Ur of the Chaldees."

[3] Gen. 12:1–4a, 5b–8.

[4] Gen. 13:2, 5, 6b*b*–7a, 8–11a (except "like the land of Egypt," in vs. 10), 12b*b*–13, 18.

[5] Gen. 15:3 f., 6–11 (except "of Ur of the Chaldees," in vs. 7), 17 f.

[6] Gen. 12:10–20, except "and she-asses and camels," in vs. 16.

[7] Gen. 16:1b–2, 4–8, 11–14.

[8] Gen. 25:1–3a, 4, and 18a, in their original form.

[9] Gen. 18:1–15.

account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah[1] and the origin of the peoples of Moab and Ammon.[2]

The life of Isaac is less fully and clearly portrayed; but special attention is given to his birth,[3] his marriage with Rebekah,[4] his relations with Abimelech of Gerar,[5] the birth of his sons,[6] and the transfer of the birthright from Esau to Jacob.[7]

The rest of the Judean narrative, so far as it is contained in Genesis, with the exception of the list of the Kings of Edom in 36:32–39, is devoted to Jacob and his family. It tells how Jacob, fleeing to the East to escape his angry brother, had a vision at Bethel[8] and, on his arrival near Haran met Rachel,[9] and served Laban twenty years for his two daughters and an interest in his flocks,[10] but finally became dissatisfied and secretly

[1] Gen. 18:16, 20–22a, 33b; 19:1–25 (except "two angels," for "men," in vs. 1; "even the men of Sodom," in vs. 4; "even Lot," in vs. 9; "son in law and," and "them" in vs. 6; "them," for "him," and "he," for "they," in vs. 17), 27a, 28.

[2] Gen. 19:30–38. [3] Gen. 21:1a, 2a, 6b–7.

[4] Gen. 22:20a*b*–24; 24 (except "brethren," for "brother," in 24:27, and "Bethuel," in vs. 50; "days at least ten," for "a month of days," in vs. 55; "mother Sarah's," in vs. 67); 25:11.

[5] Gen. 26:1a*a*, b, 2 ("And . . . . said"), 3a, 6–11; 21:34 (except "Abraham" for "Isaac"); 26:12–14, 16 f., 19–33.

[6] Gen. 25:21–26a, except "red," in vs. 25.

[7] Gen. 25:27–34; 27:1 ("And . . . . son"), 2–10 (except "and to bring it," for "for his father," in vs. 5), 14 f., 17, 18b*b*-20, 24–30a*a*, 30b–32, 35–38a*a*, 38b, 41–44a (except "in his heart," in vs. 41), 45.

[8] Gen. 28:10, 13–16, 19. [9] Gen. 29:2–14.

[10] Gen. 29:26, 31–35 (except "was his name called," for "she called his name"); 30:3b*b*–5, 7, 9–16, 20a*b*, 21, 22b*b*–23a, 24, 25, 27, 29–43 (except "and keep it," in vs. 31, "I will," and "every speckled . . . . one, and," in vs. 32, "ringstreaked," in vs. 35, "himself," for "them," in vs. 36, "in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink," in vs. 38, "and the flocks conceived" and "ringstreaked," in vs. 39, "and set . . . . ringstreaked," in vs. 40).

took his departure for Canaan;[1] also how, as he was nearing that country, he contrived to placate his brother.[2] Next should come the disappearance of Joseph,[3] then, in succession, the seizure of Dinah,[4] Jacob's return to the South,[5] and the story of Judah and Tamar.[6]

From this point onward Joseph is the dominant figure. The author tells how he served as a slave in Egypt,[7] was unjustly imprisoned,[8] but was released to interpret the dreams of the king,[9] and become his prime minister;[10] next how he saved his family from

[1] Gen. 31:1, 3, 19a, 21–23a, 25 (except "with his brethren"), 27, 31 (except "Because I was afraid"), 38–40, 43 f. (except "let it be for," for "let there be," in vs. 44), 46 (except "Jacob," for "Laban"), 48, 50a*a*, 51–53a (except "and behold the pillar," in 51, "and the pillar be witness," and "and this pillar," in vs. 52, "the God of their father," in 53a).

[2] Gen. 32:3 (except "the field of Edom"), 4–7a, 13b–22a, 23a*b*, 24–29 (except "and with men," in vs. 28), 31; 33:1–3, 4 (in part), 6–10, 12–17.

[3] Gen. 37:3a*a*, 3b–4, 12–13a, 14b–18 (except "Hebron," for "Succoth," in 14a), 21 (except "Reuben," for "Judah"), 23, 25–27, 28a*b*–b, 32 ("and they sent . . . . colors"), 33b, 35.

[4] Gen. 34:2b–3a, 3b*b*, 5, 7, 11–13a (except "and gift," in vs. 12, "and Hamor his father," in 13a), 14 (except "unto them"), 19, 25 ("that two . . . . his sword"), 26 (except "Hamor and" and "his son"), 29b–31.

[5] Gen. 35:16–22a (except "for she died," in vs. 18, "the same is Bethlehem," in vs. 19).

[6] Gen., chap. 38 (except "he," for "she," in vs. 3, and "his name was called," for "she called his name," in vss. 29 and 30).

[7] Gen. 39:1 (except "Potiphar . . . . guard"), 2 f., 4 (except "and he ministered to him"), 5, 6a*b*–b, 7a*b*–20a*a* (except "by her to be," in vs. 10), 20b.

[8] Gen. 39:21–23; 40:1a*b*–b, 3 ("into . . . . bound"), 5b, 15b.

[9] Gen. 41:9b, 14a*b*, 31, 34, 35 (except "and lay up . . . . food").

[10] Gen. 41:41, 43b–44, 46b–48, 53–54a, 55.

starvation,[1] bringing them to Egypt;[2] and finally how, when Jacob, having made provision for his burial,[3] adopted the sons of Joseph,[4] and blessed his own sons,[5] died, Joseph buried him[6] and returned to Egypt to live and die in great honor.[7]

There can be little doubt that the first section of the Judean narrative is largely legendary. So, also, it must be admitted, is the story of the tower of Babel. The same has been, and is, asserted of those concerning the patriarchs,[8] but there were Abrams in the days of

[1] Gen. 42:1a, 2, 4–7 (except "and spake roughly with them," in vs. 7), 11a, 27–28b*a*, 38; 43:1–11, 12b–23, 15–23a, 24–34; 44:1a, 2–34 (except "and his corn money," in vs. 2, "I" and "my," for "we" and "our," in vs. 30); 45:1, 4, 5 ("And now be not grieved"—"that ye sold me hither"), 9–11, 13 f.

[2] Gen. 45:19–21a*a*, 27a, 28; 46:1a, 28–34 (except "they," for "he," in vs. 28, "presented himself to," for "saw," in vs. 29, "and to his father's house," in vs. 31, "for . . . . cattle," in vs. 32); 47:1–4 (except "And . . . . Pharaoh," in vs. 4), 6b, 12–27a (except "and the land of Canaan," in vss. 13 and 15, "and for food for the little ones," in vs. 24, "in the land of Egypt," in vs. 27a).

[3] Gen. 47:29–31.

[4] Gen. 48:2b, 9b, 13–14b*a*, 17–20 (except "In thee shall Israel bless," for "In you shall Israel bless themselves" in vs. 20).

[5] Gen. 49:1b–9, 11–17 (except "upon Zidon," for "as far as Zidon," in vs. 13), 19–28 (except "out of," in vs. 20, "his bow abode in strength," for "their bows by might were broken," "the arms of his hands were made strong," for "the sinews of their hands were benumbed," and "from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel," for "by the name of the shepherd of his father Israel," in vs. 24, "by the Almighty," for "God Almighty" and "that coucheth," in vs. 25, "my progenitors . . . . bound," for "the enduring mountains, the treasures," in vs. 26).

[6] Gen. 49:33 ("he gathered . . . . bed"); 50:1–11 (except "which is beyond Jordan," in vss. 10 and 11).

[7] Gen. 50:14a, 18, 21 f.

[8] H. P. Smith, *Old Testament History*, 48, 50 f.; J. P. Peters, *Early Hebrew Story*, 46, 94, 128.

the first Babylonian dynasty, and the conditions were such as to tempt, or, finally, to drive them and others to Canaan. Hebrew tradition says that one of the name actually migrated in this direction; that he traversed the western country from north to south; that he pitched his tents at or near Beersheba; and that his descendants, to at least the third generation, fed their flocks in the same region. It says other things about them, some of which are doubtless legendary, but these seem credible, especially in view of the fact that, even after the schism between the northern and the southern tribes, the former still made pilgrimages to the shrine at Beersheba.[1] If, however, it could be shown that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were unreal characters, such an admission would not render the Judean account of them valueless; for the stories it contains are evidently much older than the work in which they have been preserved, and may supply valuable data on ethical conditions in that early period.[2] Indeed, one may be able to infer something with reference to the still earlier period to which the patriarchs are assigned.

What, now, is the ethical teaching of the Judean narrative concerning the patriarchs? It need not be sought on the surface; for, as has been noted, the author in this narrative was not a preacher, but a raconteur, who saw in these stories illustrations of human nature,

[1] Amos 5:5; 8:14.

[2] Gressmann (*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1910, 34), who holds the legendary view, says, "When one carefully weighs all the circumstances that bear on the subject, one may regard the period from 1300 to 1100 B.C. as that of the origin of the great mass of the separate stories in Genesis."

and, if he sometimes took liberties with them, did so only to bring out more clearly their original meaning. There are two other points that must also be kept in mind. The first is that the patriarchs all belong to one walk of life, for, although Joseph becomes vizier to the king of Egypt, he never forgets his origin or denies his pastoral father and brothers. These ancestors were migrant shepherds, that is, they followed a vocation that prevented them from living in houses, like some of the other inhabitants of Palestine, but, at the same time, prevented them from roaming at will, like the bedawin of the desert. They will therefore have the virtues and defects of the pastoral condition, except—and this is the second consideration—as they may have been influenced by their relations with the Egyptians, the Babylonians, and the Canaanites, all of whom, long before the period in which the patriarchs are supposed to have lived, had reached a high degree of civilization. The attractions of Canaan are thus described in the Story of Sanehat:

> It was a goodly land; as was its name.
> The fig and the vine were there;
> Wine was more plentiful than water.
> It was rich in honey and olive trees;
> All its trees bore fruit.
> There was barley there, and wheat;
> There was no end to its cattle.[1]

It had also made progress in the arts, as appears from the completeness with which its people, according to Sanehat, were equipped for war.

This is the background against which the patriarchs, if they belong to the period to which they have been

[1] *Records of the Past*², VI, 131 ff.

assigned, must be seen and studied. It is now time to inquire how these ancients, each of whom is in a sense a hero in the stories told of him, appear in this environment.

It is in order first to consider their personal characters. The vocation of the shepherd requires that he be simple, or even abstemious, in his habits. He naturally prides himself on his ability to forego the luxuries that the husbandman enjoys. There is good evidence that the Hebrews made a virtue of this necessity. In later times, when they had mostly become an agricultural people, there were always certain of them who denied themselves the use of wine, sometimes for life. They were called nazirites, and generally accorded a large measure of respect by their countrymen.[1] The case of the Rechabites may also be cited. They were a clan affiliated with the Hebrews who not only eschewed wine, but refused to live in houses or till the land on which they pastured their flocks and herds.[2] There are indications that the patriarchs were originally represented as genuine nomads; for, according to Gen. 18:8, when the angels visited Abraham at Mamre, he gave them only milk to drink, and it is probable that in 27:25 the wine which Jacob serves his father was originally wanting. Perhaps, however, the author here, as in 26:12, where Isaac sows and reaps, intended to convey the impression that this patriarch was not a strict nomad. See also the case of Lot.[3] Not that he regarded the use of wine by other classes blamable, for, it will be

[1] Judg. 13:5 ff.; Num. 6:13 ff.; cf. Amos 2:11.

[2] Jer. 35:6 f. [3] Gen. 19:32 ff.

remembered, it is he who reckons Noah among the benefactors of the race,[1] and in 27:28 and 49:11 f. mentions wine among the blessings that Isaac and Jacob promise their descendants.

The patriarchs are represented as chaste and continent, as compared with their neighbors. There is only one of them, Judah, who is accused of unnatural lust,[2] and he is by no means a shameless libertine. See especially vs. 23. The story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah[3] shows how the early Hebrews felt on the subject. They would not allow adultery. The Judean narrator pictures, not only Joseph,[4] but even Abimelech,[5] as horrified at such a suggestion. There are cases, however, in which they condoned fornication, and even what was later regarded as incest. Those of the daughters of Lot and the Canaanitess Tamar are two of them; a third is that of Dinah.[6] In neither of them are the persons involved condemned as modern standards require. In the last Jacob actually reproaches Levi and Simeon for avenging their sister.[7] The explanation is found in the position of woman in early times throughout the Orient. The married woman was the property of her husband, against whom the violation of her virtue was an irreparable injury. The unmarried woman was the property of her father, property, however, which had a certain more or less definite value in money, and could be purchased at that price. When, therefore, Shechem offered to make

[1] Gen. 5:29.
[2] Gen. 38:13 ff.
[3] Gen. 19:1 ff.
[4] Gen. 39:7 ff.
[5] Gen. 26:10.
[6] Gen. 34:1 ff.
[7] Gen. 34:30.

Dinah his wife, and pay any required sum for her, he naturally felt that he had offered her relatives abundant reparation. In later times such a settlement, though not mandatory, was sanctioned by Hebrew law.[1] The other two cases come under the same general head. When one puts a price upon a thing, one advertises one's willingness to part with it, especially if the consideration offered is something that is recognized as more desirable. Now, Lot's daughters had a certain value to him, but he placed so much higher his reputation as a host, that, when his house was beset by a mob demanding that his guests be delivered to them, he offered to sacrifice both of his daughters to save the strangers from abuse.[2] What wonder, then, that these same women, when their family was threatened with extinction, parted with their own virtue in the emergency, or that Tamar, when denied a lawful husband, took the same method to secure what she, and everyone else in her day, esteemed a higher good? They were all simply fulfilling their duty and destiny, from the standpoint of their times, and they were honored for so doing in spite of the conventions.[3]

The faith of Abraham is proverbial. Now faith, of course, is a religious sentiment; but it often induces admirable moral qualities, while the lack of it permits the development of their opposites. Thus, the faith of Abraham rendered him patient, steadfast, and fearless to a degree in which these qualities are seldom

[1] Exod. 22:16. [2] Gen. 19:7 f.

[3] Gen. 38:26. The story of Lot's daughters, whatever may have been the interpretation afterward given to it, was certainly not originally intended to cast reproach upon Moab and Ammon, the two peoples whose descent is traced from them.

exemplified. In Gen. 12:10 he is reported to have lost both his faith and his courage, and, in his confusion, to have not only lied, but risked his wife's virtue to protect himself. There is some doubt whether this passage originally belonged to the Judean narrative, but that, for the present, is of little consequence, since the Yahwist tells the same story, in 26:6 ff., of Isaac and Rebekah. Nor is the falsehood or the exposure of the woman in either case the thing of importance. It is by no means strange that a man or woman in a moment of weakness should give way to selfishness and resort to deception. Many have done so for once without losing the respect and confidence of their fellows. The significant thing is, that, although in both cases the falsehood is discovered, in neither is it in itself treated as a serious matter by the parties concerned. In other words, these stories betray the admiration for cunning as compared with courage, which is one of the noticeable features of the oriental character. There are other examples in plenty. Indeed, the Judean account of Jacob is largely a series of tricks by which the persons introduced, evidently to the author's amusement, seek to overreach one another. Thus it was by such a trick that Rebekah obtained the blessing of the firstborn for Jacob;[1] that Laban secured the services of Jacob for fourteen years;[2] that Jacob transferred the best of Laban's cattle to his own possession;[3] and that the same rid himself of his brother Esau.[4] See, also, the stories, how Tamar outwitted her father-in-law,[5] and how Joseph entrapped his

[1] Gen. 27:15, 27. Gen. 29:26. [3] Gen. 30:37 ff. [4] Gen. 33:14 ff. [5] Gen. 38:7 ff.

brothers.[1] In some of these cases the end sought was worthy, but in others both the end and the means used to obtain it were ethically reprehensible.

In the preceding discussion it has been impossible to keep personal entirely distinct from domestic ethics. The second topic must now be more particularly considered.

In this period the family is especially prominent. Indeed, the development of the family is represented as the ideal to the attainment of which every other object must be subordinated. The sacrifices required of the individual in its interest were sometimes, from the modern standpoint, cruel and revolting. Thus, because Sarah was denied offspring, she was obliged to submit to the presence of a rival in the person of Hagar in her household,[2] and Rachel long suffered almost beyond endurance from inward as well as outward reproaches because she could not fulfil the function of a desirable wife.[3] The cases of the daughters of Lot and the Canaanitess Tamar have already been noted, and their devotion in that they sacrificed their virtue and involved a father and a father-in-law in incest, that the families which they represented might not be extinguished.

The patriarchs, as they appear in the oldest narrative, show no lack of affection for their wives or children, but they have the unconscious defects of oriental parents, who are often unwisely indulgent, especially toward their sons, and, when there are more wives than one, blindly partial toward the child, or children, of the favorite. Thus, Isaac indulged the careless Esau and

[1] Gen. 44:1. [2] Gen. 16:1 ff. [3] Gen. 30:14 f.

ignored the plodding Jacob;[1] while Jacob, in his turn, alienated his other sons and brought upon himself a bitter bereavement by his foolish fondness for Joseph.[2]

The inferior position of woman has already been noted. The earliest Hebrew traditions represent her as the property of her father or her husband, and no protest is made against a relation so unnatural and degrading. The bride was actually sold to the family into which she married. This fact is not prominent in the story of Rebekah's espousal,[3] but it is easily inferred here as well as in the cases of Rachel and Leah,[4] and it is very clearly presented in the negotiations between Jacob and Shechem concerning Dinah.[5] Of course, as has already been observed, since daughters had their price, the father might accept a compensation for injury done one,[6] or even sacrifice her, as Lot was willing to do,[7] for the sake of something that seemed to him at the time of greater value or importance.

The treatment of woman as a chattel explains the practice of polygamy among the early Hebrews. A man of strong passions would naturally, if permitted by public opinion, have as many wives as he could afford, while the man of only average means, if his first choice for any reason proved unsatisfactory, would be tempted to sacrifice her comfort or happiness that he might attain his object in marriage, especially if it were offspring. In early times Hebrew opinion sanctioned, not only polygamy, and that, too, when the women were sisters, as in the case of Rachel and Leah,[8]

[1] Gen. 25:28.
[2] Gen. 37:3 f.
[3] Gen. 24:53.
[4] Gen. 37:38.
[5] Gen. 34:11 f.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Gen. 19:8.
[8] Gen. 29:31 ff.

but concubinage, a relation in which the woman was a slave wholly in the power of her owner. She might belong to the husband. There are no cases of this kind in the second section of the Judean narrative, but there are those in which she belongs to the wife and the wife gives her voluntarily to the husband. Thus, Sarah gives her maid Hagar to Abraham,[1] and Rachel and Leah give Bilhah and Zilpah to Jacob.[2] In such cases, according to the Code of Hammurabi,[3] the husband was forbidden to take a second concubine, but there is no mention of such a restriction among the Hebrews.[4]

The concubines of which one reads in the earliest narrative were slaves, but they were not the only class of bondservants among the Hebrews. In the ancient world slavery was a universal institution, and the patriarchs bought and sold their fellow-men unrebuked. Abraham had many slaves in his family besides Hagar,[5] one of them being the wise and faithful steward whom he sent to Mesopotamia to arrange the marriage between Isaac and Rebekah.[6] Isaac, also, held men in bondage,[7] and, as for Joseph, whose foresight prevented a widespread famine, according to the correct reading in Gen. 47:21 he made the Egyptians pay for their lives with their freedom, for "he caused them to serve as slaves from one end of the border of Egypt to the other."

[1] Gen. 16:2. [2] Gen. 30:4, 9. [3] § 144.

[4] When Sarah dealt severely with Hagar, as narrated in Gen. 16:6, she followed exactly a provision of the Code of Hammurabi (§ 146) according to which, if a maid who has borne children makes herself the equal of her mistress, the mistress "may put a mark upon her and count her among the maidservants."

[5] Gen. 24:35. [6] Gen. 24:2. [7] Gen. 26:19, 25, 32.

In this connection it is proper to inquire what the early Hebrews, according to the Judean narrative, thought about the duties of children toward their parents and toward one another. It is easy to see that, in view of the power lodged in the father, they would naturally require reverence for him and obedience to his commands. The Semites all early formulated these requirements and severely punished any serious neglect of them. Thus, the Code of Hammurabi[1] prescribed that the man who struck his father should lose his hands. The Hebrews, also, from the earliest times doubtless had a severe penalty for such an offense, which, however, would seldom have to be inflicted, or even recalled, to secure proper respect and obedience for worthy parents. At any rate, there are, in the earliest traditions of this period, touching examples of filial affection. One of them is found in the part played in the story of Joseph by Judah, who is represented as at last so changed from his former mercenary self that, when Joseph threatened to detain Benjamin in Egypt, he offered to take his brother's place rather than witness the effect on his father of the loss of the second son of the beloved Rachel.[2] The tender reverence of Joseph himself for his father is equally admirable and affecting: witness his message to the old man,[3] the reception he gave him on his arrival in Egypt,[4] the provision he made for his last days,[5] and the piety with which he finally laid the patriarch to rest in his chosen sepulcher.[6] Indeed, of all the noble qualities of this

[1] § 195.
[2] Gen. 44:30 ff.
[3] Gen. 45:9 f.
[4] Gen. 46:29.
[5] Gen. 47:12.
[6] Gen. 50:7 ff.

remarkable character, there is none more worthy of praise or imitation than his devotion to his father.

The constitution of the Hebrew family was not conducive to fraternal kindness and affection. When there was but one wife, the advantage given to the firstborn naturally made him an object of envy and hatred to his brothers. When there were more wives than one, it was even more difficult for the children to "dwell together in unity." A case of the first kind is that of Esau and Jacob, and one of the second that of Joseph and his brothers. A state of discord was not, however, regarded as normal. It is therefore with evident approbation that tradition tells of the reconciliation between Esau and Jacob, and Judah's atonement for his cruelty to Joseph by his willingness to save Benjamin from slavery. Here, however, as in devotion to his father, Joseph is the shining example; for he not only manifests the utmost tenderness for Benjamin,[1] but treats his half-brothers, all of them, as if he had never known injury at their hands.[2]

The range of the Judean Genesis is so narrow that there is very little material on which to base an idea of its teaching from the social standpoint, even if Lot be reckoned outside the domestic zone.

The mention of Lot suggests a quality for which some of the patriarchs were conspicuous; namely, magnanimity. It showed itself in Abraham, when his servants became embroiled with Lot's, and he gave the latter his choice before himself deciding which direction he would take;[3] in Isaac, also, when, in spite of the

[1] Gen. 43:29; 45:14.

[2] Gen. 45:4–5a; 47:12; 50:21.

[3] Gen. 13:7 ff.

annoyance he had suffered from the Gerarites, he consented to make a treaty with their king.[1]

There are more examples of the oriental virtue of hospitality. The scene at Mamre in which Abraham unwittingly entertains three angels[2] is classic. The nature and excellence of genuine hospitality could not be more attractively exemplified. Lot, also, appears at his best as a host. He had so exalted an idea of his responsibility in this relation that, as has already been pointed out, he was willing to sacrifice his daughters to the passions of a mob rather than permit his guests to be debauched.[3]

There is no hint that either Abraham or Lot ever put any restrictions upon their hospitality. They themselves were sojourners, and knew how to value the sympathy and protection of alien peoples. The patriarchs, however, according to tradition, sometimes in other respects discriminated against strangers: Abraham, for example, when he sent his steward to the land of his birth to get a wife for his son Isaac;[4] and Jacob when, doubtless with the approval of his parents, he chose his wives from his mother's family. This policy, however, could not be maintained. Dinah yielded to the wooing of Shechem,[5] and Judah sought his wife among the Canaanites.[6] Indeed, all the sons of Jacob must have done the same, except Joseph, whose wife was an Egyptian. These alliances were the more readily formed, since the Hebrews and the Canaanites spoke the same language—were, in fact,

[1] Gen. 26:26 ff.
[2] Gen. 18:1 ff.
[3] Gen. 19:1 ff.
[4] Gen. 24:1 ff.
[5] Gen. 34:2.
[6] Gen. 38:2.

nearly related branches of the same race. Thus the Hebrews acquired a claim on the land of Canaan that furnished them with a warrant for invading the country when they escaped from bondage in Egypt.

Reference has been made to the treaties made by the patriarchs with their neighbors. There is nothing to indicate that these covenants were not loyally fulfilled. This is explained by the fact that, although, as has been seen, the Hebrews regarded deception for the sake of personal advantage or protection as allowable, and the best of them sometimes resorted to falsehood, they had the greatest respect for an oath. They therefore, when anything of consequence was involved, required such security. Thus, when Abraham sent his servant to Mesopotamia, he put him under oath faithfully to fulfil his mission,[1] and Jacob, when he was dying, although he had not the slightest reason to doubt the devotion of his distinguished son, required him to take a similar oath.[2] Such an oath, as Heb. 6:16 puts it, was "final for confirmation." Therefore Jacob and Laban, each of whom had abundant reason for distrusting the other, when they had made the covenant suggested by the latter,[3] went their opposite ways satisfied;[4] and Abimelech, although he had given Isaac good ground for resentment, when the customary rites had been performed, went home secure against future retaliation.[5] It is in harmony with this hardly creditable custom that, in Gen. 15:7 ff., Yahweh him-

[1] Gen. 24:2 f.

[2] Gen. 47:31.

[3] Not, as in the received text, Jacob.

[4] Gen. 31:46.

[5] Gen. 26:31.

self is represented as taking an oath to satisfy Abraham that he and Sarah were really to have a son.

The survey of the Patriarchal Period, as described in the Judean narrative, the best of the Hebrew authorities on the subject, is now complete. The result is not entirely satisfactory, since, as has already more than once been intimated, it is impossible to say how old or how reliable were the sources from which the author drew, or how freely he handled the materials at his disposal. There are, however, limits to the uncertainty thus produced. In the first place, it may be assumed that the patriarchs, if they were real persons, were no better than they are depicted. On the other hand, when one reads the Code of Hammurabi, which is at least as old as the time of Abraham, and may be from one to two centuries older, and considers the ethical progress it represents, these Hebrew worthies, who lived within the radius of its operation and influence, do not seem to be much overdrawn.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERIOD OF THE EXODUS

It seems a formidable task to discuss the ethical teaching of the period spent by the Hebrews on their way from Egypt to the Promised Land, when one considers the amount of space given to it in the Pentateuch —the whole of the last four books—and how much of this space is devoted to ethical precepts. There are, first, the commands and prohibitions of the Decalogue in Exod., chap. 20, repeated, with some modifications, in Deut., chap. 5. They are followed, in the first instance, by the so-called Book of the Covenant, Exod., 20:22—23:33. The contents of both the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant are largely repeated, with variations and additions, in Lev., chaps. 17–26, a section that is commonly designated as the Law of Holiness. The first of these codes, according to Exod. 24:3 ff., was promulgated soon after the arrival of the Hebrews at Sinai, and the second, according to Lev. 26:46, before their departure from that vicinity. The latter is noticeably elaborate, as compared with the other, yet it was not final, for, when Moses was on the point of leaving his people in Moab, he gave them, we are told, a third, including the second version of the Decalogue, which has been preserved in Deuteronomy. The three, with scattered passages of ethical significance, furnish an amount of material that would be welcome, if it were a homogeneous collection, but which, in its present form, is simply confusing. Fortunately,

the case is not so difficult as it seems. The critical analysis of the Pentateuch has shown that these codes were produced at intervals, not of months or years, but of centuries, and that even the oldest of them, as transmitted, does not belong to the period of the Exodus. The Judean narrative has no place for it. Its account of the stay at the sacred mount, in brief, is as follows:

The Hebrews came from the Red Sea by the way of Meribah and encamped at the foot of the mountain;[1] Yahweh summoned Moses and instructed him to prepare for a solemn interview on the following day.[2] The next morning Moses again went up into the mountain, where Yahweh met him and dictated to him the terms of a covenant between himself and Israel;[3] Moses put these terms into writing and afterward he and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu with seventy of the elders ate and drank before Yahweh in the mount in confirmation of the covenant based upon them.[4] Then Yahweh commanded that Moses and his people proceed to Canaan; whereat the people were at first greatly disturbed.[5] Before they started Hobab visited the camp, and Moses persuaded him to cast his lot with the children of Israel.[6]

This account, to be sure, contains a series of commandments,[7] supposed to have constituted a Decalogue,

[1] Exod. 15:22a; 17:7; 19:2b. [2] Exod. 19:18, 20 f., 25; 34:2 f.

[3] Exod. 34:4 ("and Moses . . . . commanded him"), 5a, 8, 10 ("And . . . . covenant"), 14 (except "for"), 17, 19a, 21 f., 25 f.

[4] Exod. 34:27 f.; 24:1, 9–11.

[5] Exod. 33:1, 3a, 4 (except "these evil tidings").

[6] Exod. 18:7, 9–11 (except "Jethro" twice); Num. 10:29–32.

[7] Exod. 34:10 ff.

all of which, however, are purely religious regulations. Three of them agree with the first, second, and fourth of the Decalogue in Exod., chap. 20, the rest having to do with feasts, firstlings, and first-fruits, except the last, which corresponds to Exod. 23:19.[1]

The absence of ethical precepts in the Judean narrative is not so strange as at first sight it appears. The Hebrews had just escaped from bondage. They attributed their success to the assistance of Yahweh. Their first duty, therefore, was, not to construct an elaborate code for the day when they expected to enter Canaan, but to recognize in a fitting manner the hand of their God in their deliverance and renew their allegiance to him; and that is what, according to this narrative, they did, pledging themselves to worship him alone and practice observances that would mark them as his worshipers.

It should also be noted that the Hebrews, although they had for a long time been oppressed, cannot have been the barbarians they have sometimes been imagined. They came from the same stock with one of the most enlightened rulers of antiquity. Their fathers had lived and thriven under the laws that he had codified. Later they had enjoyed the favor of the kings of Egypt. They may have had written precepts or regulations; they certainly had a traditional code, suited to their simple life, by which they were governed; and this was sufficient when they were again free, so long as their mode of life remained unchanged, as it did in the desert.

This does not mean that the moral standards of the Hebrews at the Exodus were ideal, or even as high

[1] See further pp. 109 f.

as they had previously been. The people had been oppressed, and tradition confesses that they were to a serious degree demoralized; but they could not deny their descent from Abraham, and some of them showed themselves worthy of their lineage. Nor is this all that can safely be asserted. The Exodus was an event calculated to produce a great moral uplift, and this because it was more to those who were then delivered from slavery than a display of the power of Yahweh. In the preceding chapter reference was made to the promise of Yahweh to Abraham and the oath by which it was confirmed.[1] It is not necessary to prove that such a covenant was ever actually made. It is enough that the descendants of the patriarch believed that there had been such a transaction.[2] When, therefore, Moses returned to Egypt from Midian, he proclaimed himself a messenger of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,[3] and when at length he and his people found themselves beyond the reach of their enemies, they saw in the result a moral as well as a physical triumph, an illustrious example of the faithfulness of Yahweh. They were therefore willing and eager, when they were out of danger, to enter into a covenant to serve their Deliverer in any way that he was pleased to prescribe.[4] Some of them afterward forgot this engagement, but

[1] Gen. 15:3 ff.

[2] Exod. 33:1; Num. 11:12.

[3] Exod. 3:16; 4:29 f.

[4] The prevalence of the idea that the God of the Exodus was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob militates against the view proposed by Budde, that the Hebrews first became acquainted with Yahweh through Moses' father-in-law, the priest of Midian. See, also, the name Reuel, which is equally unfavorable.

they were punished by the severest penalties for their disloyalty.[1]

There is another moral attribute that is emphasized in the Judean account of the Exodus, namely, compassion. It was his compassion, Yahweh is represented as saying in his first interview with Moses,[2] that prompted him to undertake the deliverance of his people from the cruelty of their oppressors; and it was his sympathy for them that moved them to test his faithfulness.[3] This sympathy was bestowed without regard to the character of the recipients. There are other passages in which Yahweh is represented as exercising a similar tenderness toward his people in spite of their unworthiness. Thus, in Exod. 34:6 f., he is made to proclaim himself "a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in kindness and faithfulness, keeping [showing continued] kindness to thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin"; but these are later additions to the original work.

The person most prominent in the history of the Exodus, of course, is Moses. In Num. 12:3 he is described by a later writer as "very meek above all the men that were on the face of the earth." The Judean narrator is not so extravagant, but he also pictures the great leader as remarkably humble; for it is he who represents him as shrinking from undertaking the mission to Egypt because he feared that his people would not recognize him as a messenger of Yahweh, and that he was not sufficiently gifted in speech to

[1] Num. 25:4.

[2] Exod. 3:7 f.

[3] Exod. 3:16 f.; 4:31.

overcome their unbelief.[1] The only other person who deserves mention in this connection is Caleb, whose courage the author records in Num. 13:30 with evident approbation.

The passages concerning Moses that have been cited reveal only one side of his character. There are others which describe him as giving way to anger or even violence. Thus, it will be remembered that he killed an Egyptian for smiting a Hebrew, and fled the country because he was threatened with exposure.[2] Later, when some of his followers accused him of failure as a leader and refused to obey him, he is said to have become "very wroth" and to have called down upon them a dreadful penalty from Yahweh.[3] The latter of these two incidents illustrates a serious defect in the Hebrews' idea of justice. They identified the interests and responsibilities of the individual so completely with those of the family or other collective body that, when one of the members offended, all had to share in the penalty. Here, for example, neither Moses nor the author seems to have thought it anything but just that, not only the men who had been guilty of insubordination, but "all that appertained to them," that is, as appears from vs. 27, their wives and children, "went down alive into Sheol."[4] The same criticism may justly be made with reference to the plagues inflicted upon the Egyptians. According to Exod. 7:14 it was Pharaoh who was responsible for the detention of the Hebrews; yet the humblest and most innocent of his subjects suffered equally with him when the water

[1] Exod. 4:1 ff.

[2] Exod. 2:11 ff.

[3] Num. 16:15, 31, 33a.

[4] Num. 16:33; also 21:3.

of the Nile was polluted and the fish that were in it perished;[1] when the land was defiled with decaying frogs;[2] when the cattle throughout the country were destroyed by a plague[3] and the crops by hail[4] and locusts;[5] and, finally, when the firstborn perished in a night, "from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon."[6] It took the Hebrews a long time to learn that such indiscriminate penalties were acts, not of justice, but of cruelty.[7]

In the preceding chapter attention was called to the carelessness of the early Hebrews in reference to the truth unless they were under oath. It seems strange that Moses should be represented as sharing this defect, yet such is the fact. Indeed, Yahweh himself is implicated, for, when he sent Moses to Egypt, he put into his mouth the request, "Let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, that we may sacrifice to Yahweh our God."[8] The language used naturally implies that the Hebrews intended to return to Egypt after the proposed feast. Pharaoh so understood it, and Moses had to invent one excuse after another for rejecting the king's concessions to prevent him from discovering his mistake. Thus, when Pharaoh suggested that the people sacrifice "in the land," Moses objected that they would thus offend the Egyptians.[9] When the king consented to let them go without their cattle, the Hebrew leader insisted that they must take their cattle with them because they should not

[1] Exod. 7:21a.
[2] Exod. 8:9 f.
[3] Exod. 9:6.
[4] Exod. 9:25b.
[5] Exod. 10:15b.
[6] Exod. 10:29.
[7] Deut. 24:16.
[8] Exod. 3:18.
[9] Exod. 8:25 f.

know which or how many of the animals Yahweh would require until they reached the place of sacrifice.[1] These excuses worked so well that, when Pharaoh finally yielded, he supposed he was granting only a brief respite from labor. "Go," he said, "serve Yahweh, as ye have said."[2] When, therefore he heard that "the people were fled," he made haste to pursue them.[3] It will be interesting, later on, to compare with this unbiased version of the story of Moses' negotiations with Pharaoh the parallel accounts in the other narratives.

It remains to notice the attitude of the Hebrews of the period of the Exodus toward other peoples. They would naturally feel hostile toward their oppressors—which should perhaps be taken into account before condemning too severely the display of cunning that has just been discussed—but there is no indication of any such feeling toward other foreigners. On the contrary, they seem to have welcomed, as they naturally would, any, of whatever kindred, who were prepared to make common cause with them in their effort for freedom. Thus, when they left Egypt, according to Exod. 12:38, they were accompanied by "a mixed multitude" of foreigners, who finally tired of the monotonous fare of the desert but complained no more bitterly than did the children of Israel on the same occasion.[4] Meanwhile Moses, whose wife was a Midianite, had added to their number by persuading Hobab, his father-in-law, to migrate to Canaan.[5] Finally Caleb, a Kenizzite, whose family afterward became numerous and

[1] Exod. 10:24 f. [3] Exod. 14:5 f. [5] Num. 10:29 ff.
[2] Exod. 12:31. [4] Num. 11:4.

influential in southern Palestine, joined forces with him.[1] It appears, then, that, when the Hebrews entered Palestine, they were by no means a homogeneous people, but included a considerable admixture of foreigners to whom they gladly gave the privilege of sharing their fortunes.

[1] Num. 13:30; also Judg. 1:12 ff.

CHAPTER V

THE HEROIC PERIOD

The Hebrews—or some of them—probably migrated to Egypt during the dominance of the Hyksos, that is, before 1580 B.C., and escaped from bondage there in the reign of Merenptah, that is, between 1225 and 1215 B.C. Meanwhile Palestine had undergone various and interesting vicissitudes. After the Hyksos had been expelled the Egyptians took possession of it and held it, sometimes with difficulty, for about two centuries. Then the natives, assisted by other Semites, taking advantage of the peaceable disposition of Amenhotep IV (1375–1350 B.C.), seem to have gained their independence. When Seti I (1313–1292 B.C.), of the XIXth Dynasty, came to the throne, he again invaded the country, and Rameses II (1292–1225 B.C.), who is commonly identified with the Pharaoh of the oppression, so completely subjugated and defended it, that during the rest of his reign it remained tranquil and the relations between it and Egypt became very intimate.[1]

The same state of things seems to have continued for some time after the accession of Merenptah. At any rate, in his eighth year Semites were still free to enter the country occupied by the Hebrews.[2] Later, however, there was trouble in Palestine, and this king,

[1] Petrie, *History of Egpyt*, III, 71; *Records of the Past*[2], II, 101 ff.

[2] A frontier official reports the admission of a tribe of nomads into the region of Succoth to feed themselves and their cattle: Petrie, *op. cit.*, III, 114 f.

if his own story is to be trusted, severely punished its inhabitants, including a tribe called Israel,[1] Hebrews, perhaps, who had not been in Egypt or had made an earlier exodus.[2] Later still the country was threatened from the north by a coalition which was defeated by Rameses III,[3] but by the time the Hebrews appeared east of the Jordan (1175 B.C.), the Philistines (Purusatu), who were a part of the defeated movement, and some of their confederates had already gotten possession of the sea-coast.[4]

It appears, then, that when the Hebrews from Egypt invaded Palestine the country was in more or less confusion, and they had powerful rivals for its possession. This condition of things must be taken into account in any study of the ethical development of the Chosen People during this period. It is easy to perceive that in such a period great importance would be given to physical strength and prowess, also that the personal qualities most esteemed would be those which, if not produced, are developed, by danger and hardship, namely, courage and self-sacrifice. The heroes of the period are men who never gave place to fear, but were always ready to stake their lives for the defense of their common country as well as their particular tribes or families.

First in order comes Joshua. He is not mentioned in the Judean account of the Exodus, so far as it has

[1] Breasted, *History of Egypt*, 466.

[2] Another possibility is that Israel represents a tribe into which the Hebrews were afterward merged.

[3] Petrie, *op. cit.*, III, 150 f.; Breasted, *op. cit.*, 477 ff.

[4] Petrie, *op. cit.*, III, 148; Breasted, *op. cit.*, 512.

been preserved. When, therefore, he is introduced, he appears to better advantage than in the Ephraimite narrative, where he is at first overshadowed by his master, Moses. It is also in his favor that the Judean narrator does not represent the capture of Jericho as an entirely miraculous affair, but in part the result of a furious attack by the Hebrews led by Joshua in person.[1] In this and all the rest of the affairs in which he figures he is the ideal soldier of the period to which he belongs.[2] Caleb, also, is a favorite with the Judean author, and for the same reason.[3] The Song of Deborah[4] is largely devoted to praise for Barak and other (nameless) heroes who, whether great or small, "offered themselves willingly" at the battle of the Kishon,[5] and reproach for those who, for any reason, "came not to the help of Yahweh . . . . among the mighty."[6] The prophetess would have commended Ehud, in spite of his treacherous method, for putting to death single-handed the tyrant Eglon.[7] Indeed, she invokes upon the Kenite Jael blessings above the lot of other women that dwelt in tents for murdering a man who, exhausted by his efforts to escape from the victorious Hebrews, had

[1] Josh. 6:10 f., 14, 15 ("And . . . . manner"), 16b, 17 ("And . . . . house"), 19, 20 ("So the people shouted"—"and they took the city"), 21.

[2] There are those who reduce the Judean element in the Book of Joshua to such an extent as to eliminate Joshua; but there is good authority for maintaining that chaps. 7–9 are largely from this source. See especially Moore in *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, art. "Joshua (Book)," §§ 6 ff.

[3] Num. 13:30; Josh. 15:14 ff.; Judg. 1:10 ff.

[4] Judg., chap. 5.

[5] Vss. 2, 9, 13 ff., 18.

[6] Vss. 16 f., 23.

[7] Judg. 3:16 ff.

thrown himself upon her mercy.[1] In Gideon is portrayed a man as daring as he was resourceful; who also had a sense of humor, as is shown in his rough and ready treatment of the wits of Succoth and Penuel when he returned from the overthrow of Zeba and Zalmunna.[2] Samson, to judge from the stories told of him, was almost a buffoon, yet his wantonness in this and even more serious respects did not quench the admiration felt for his reckless devotion, to the very last of his brief life, to the deliverance of his people. There are two others who must not be overlooked, Saul and Jonathan. The Judean writer could hardly be expected to do justice to the former; yet he could not conceal his admiration for the king's early achievements, and the son is even more favorably treated.[3] He tells the story of their heroic death with evident sympathy, and quotes David's lament as his warrant for numbering them among Israel's greatest.[4]

In the preceding paragraph reference was made to falsehood as one of the defects of some of the persons named, as in the case of the lie by which Ehud gained a private audience with Eglon,[5] and the simulation of hospitality by which Jael deceived Sisera.[6] This was also one of Samson's failings: witness the lies he told Delilah when she asked him what was the secret of his strength.[7] It was by a pretense of weariness that he got the opportunity to pull down the building in which he perished with his tormentors.[8]

[1] Judg. 5:24.
[2] Judg. 8:5 ff.
[3] I Sam. 9:2; 11:6 ff.; 14:1 ff.
[4] II Sam. 1:19 ff.
[5] Judg. 3:19.
[6] Judg. 5:25 ff.
[7] Judg. 16:7, 11, 13.
[8] Judg. 16:26.

The weakness of Samson for women has also been alluded to. The casual way in which two instances are introduced,[1] one after the other, shows that in this heroic, as in the preceding periods, the harlot was openly tolerated, and dealings with her, even by married men, were not generally regarded as immoral. The same point is illustrated in the case of the harlot Rahab, who, because she saved the Hebrew spies from capture by her nimble falsehoods, was counted worthy to survive, with her family, the slaughter in which all the rest of the people of Jericho perished.[2] It should, however, be noted that sodomy was evidently condemned,[3] and, although a husband might forgive wantonness in a wife or concubine,[4] the violation of a married woman was a crime that could not be overlooked.[5]

The point just made properly comes under the head of domestic ethics, on which this period furnishes comparatively little material. There is nothing to indicate that the position of woman was generally any higher than in earlier times. The husband still commonly bought his wife of her father. If he was poor, but otherwise desirable, a compensation of another kind was arranged, as when Saul stipulated that David should bring him the foreskins of a hundred Philistines.[6] When the Benjamites had been reduced to six hundred males, and the question arose how they were to be supplied with wives, the people, who had sworn not to give their daughters to the survivors, allowed them to supply themselves by kidnaping girls at the feast at

[1] Judg. 16:1, 4.
[2] Josh. 2:4b–5a; 6:25a.
[3] Judg. 19:22.
[4] Judg. 19:3.
[5] Judg. 20:8, 19, 44.
[6] I Sam. 18:25.

Shiloh,[1] a proceeding that was entirely in accord with the spirit and practice of the period. In this period, too, men held women cheap, so cheap that the Levite of this story surrendered his helpless concubine to a mob to save himself from maltreatment.[2] There was one, however, whom those of her time were obliged to respect and obey, the prophetess Deborah, who was the soul of the movement that resulted in the overthrow of Sisera and opened the way for the union of the tribes under Saul and David.

There were slaves in Israel in this as in the preceding periods. From the Song of Deborah[3] one learns how some of them were obtained. They were generally treated as members of the family. Thus Saul makes one of them his companion in the search for his father's asses;[4] and Abigail takes counsel with one of those belonging to her husband Nabal.[5] Benziger uses these passages to sustain the opinion that Hebrew slavery was "a blessing for master and servant,"[6] but no amount of patronage can atone to a human being for the lack of his or her natural rights. Some of the female slaves became the concubines of their masters. The one whose cruel death at Gibeah aroused the indignation of all the rest of Israel against the tribe of Benjamin has already been mentioned. The only one mentioned by name is Rizpah, a wife of Saul, whose devotion to her sons is one of the most pathetic manifestations of maternal love described in the Old Testament. It was she who was the innocent occasion of the breach between

[1] Judg. 21:17 f., 19 f. (in part).
[2] Judg. 19:25.
[3] Vs. 30.
[4] I Sam. 9:5 ff.
[5] I Sam. 25:14 ff.
[6] *Hebräische Archäologie*, 159.

Ishbaal, who, in accordance with the custom of the time, expected to inherit her with the Kingdom, and Abner, who had taken possession of her, and, because Ishbaal asserted his claim, went over to David.[1]

Among the social virtues of this period hospitality is prominent. Gideon was prompt to offer his unknown visitor entertainment,[2] and Manoah was equally hospitable.[3] The people of Succoth and Penuel refused to supply Gideon with food for his weary warriors, and he punished them severely for their churlishness, with the evident approval of the narrator.[4] The Levite expected to be hospitably received at Gibeah. The old man who finally gave him shelter regarded the attack upon him as a violation of sacred rights and the indignation aroused throughout Israel was doubtless due to sympathy with the Levite rather than his unfortunate concubine.[5]

Here, again, it is necessary to call attention to the inconsistency of the Hebrews in trifling with the truth in the ordinary relations of life and insisting upon the strictest observance of formal covenants. Thus Rahab is represented as lying without the slightest hesitation to the messengers of her king, but the Hebrews as scrupulously redeeming their promise to protect her when the city was taken.[6] More notable still is the case of the Gibeonites. They obtained by fraud a promise of exemption from the fate to which the Canaanites generally had been devoted; yet, when Joshua discovered that he had been duped, he stood by the

[1] II Sam. 3:7 ff.
[2] Judg. 6:8.
[3] Judg. 13:15.
[4] Judg. 8:4 ff.
[5] Judg. 19:11 ff.
[6] Josh. 2:4b–5a; 6:25a.

letter of his engagement and "delivered them not into the hands of the children of Israel."[1] Saul would have sacrificed his son Jonathan in fulfilment of a hasty adjuration, had not the people intervened and absolved him from it.[2] Here belongs, also, the touching story of Jonathan's loyalty to David in spite of the knowledge that the popularity of the young Bethlehemite was hateful to his father and would inevitably block his own way to the throne.[3] David did not overstate the matter when he said in his lament over his fallen friend,

> Thy love to me was wonderful,
> Passing the love of women.[4]

This reverence for oaths and covenants was doubtless fostered by the traditional doctrine of the relation between Yahweh and Israel, of which the ark of the covenant was a symbol and constant reminder.[5]

The sense of justice among the Hebrews was not noticeably developed during this period. It is not clear whether Josh. 7:24 f. should be cited or not in this connection. This passage, in its present form, recites that Joshua, for Achan's fault, destroyed, not only Achan himself, but "the silver, and the mantle, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had"; but some of these particulars are certainly, and all of them possibly, additions to the original text. It is possible, however, that the phrase in vs. 24, "all that he had," that is, all that belonged to

[1] Josh. 9:15b, 26.
[2] I Sam. 14:24, 44 f.
[3] I Sam. 20:30 ff.
[4] II Sam. 1:26.
[5] Josh. 3:6, 11; 4:9 f.; 6:11.

him, may include his wife and children. See Num. 16:30, where it certainly has quite as comprehensive a meaning. The treatment of Benjamin by the other tribes on account of the injury done to the Levite was not only unjust, because indiscriminate, but cruel in the extreme, as the Israelites themselves finally confessed,[1] in that a tribe was made to pay for the life of a single slave with the loss of eighteen thousand men.[2] A clearer moral vision manifests itself in the indignation created by the inhuman demand of Nahash upon the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead,[3] the protest of Jonathan against his father's insane jealousy of David,[4] and the confession of Saul, who, in one of his saner moments, acknowledged that he had treated his rival unjustly.[5]

The Hebrews, being almost constantly at war with their neighbors during this period, could not be expected to show much friendliness toward foreigners. It is not strange, therefore, that Manoah and his wife objected to an alliance between their son and a Philistine.[6] It does, however, shock the modern reader to learn that they often killed Gentiles without provocation and sometimes inflicted upon their enemies the most revolting cruelties. Thus we are told that, when they invaded Canaan, they destroyed the entire population of the cities they captured.[7] Later, a company of the Danites migrated to the north, robbing Micah of his priest and

[1] Judg. 21:15.
[2] Judg. 20:44.
[3] I Sam. 11:6.
[4] I Sam. 20:32.
[5] I Sam. 24:17.
[6] Judg. 14:2.
[7] Josh. 6:21; Judg. 1:17, 25. On the discrepancy between 1:17 and Num. 21:1–3, see Moore, *Judges*, 36.

his idols on the way,[1] and, when they found at Laish "a people quiet and secure," "smote them with the edge of the sword" and took possession of their country.[2] The great Danite, Samson, according to Judg. 15:14 f., on one occasion killed a thousand men in his own defense, and, according to Judg. 16:30, "the dead he slew in his death," when he pulled down the temple of Dagon at Gaza, "were more than all they that he slew in his life." For a case of mutilation, see Judg. 1:5 f. These and other instances of cruelty, some of which are reported to have been committed by the express direction of Yahweh, have caused many devout readers of the Old Testament no little perplexity. The question, however, is not, as these good men and women have put it, How could a just God ordain such things? but, How could the Hebrews suppose that he had commanded them? and this is answered by saying that they were at the time morally undeveloped.

[1] Judg. 18:17 ff. [2] Judg. 18:27.

CHAPTER VI

THE PERIOD OF DAVID AND SOLOMON

The Heroic Period was one of constant stress and danger. When Saul was anointed, Samuel thought that he had found the man to put an end to the wearisome struggle and establish permanent security; and the new king's first acts went far toward justifying this expectation. In process of time, however, the burden of his office unsettled his mind, and, when he fell in the desperate encounter with the Philistines at Gilboa, it seemed as if the good work he had done had come to naught. This, indeed, would have been the case had there not been a man more versatile by nature, and more thoroughly trained for leadership, to prevent such a result. It was David, therefore, who really established the monarchy and thus introduced a new period. The dynasty he founded lasted more than four centuries; but, since the kingdom retained its original size and importance only during his reign and that of his son, and the conditions then existing may be supposed to have had a peculiar influence on the ethics of the time, the period next to be considered should close with the death of Solomon. It was a period of surpassing military strength, industrial prosperity, and political influence; and it had the virtues and defects corresponding to these conditions. The question now is, How do the oldest records present these ethical phenomena?

The hero of this period, without controversy, was

David. A friend described him to Saul as not only a skilful musician, but a sturdy fellow, tried in war, prudent in speech, and withal comely in person.[1] Here the young man's courage and prowess are especially emphasized. It is therefore not strange that Saul at once made him his adjutant,[2] and a little later gave him a command,[3] with the result that he became the idol of the people.[4] He was not spoiled by their plaudits, but remained humble, protesting, when it was suggested that he might have Saul's daughter, that he was not worthy to be the son-in-law of the king.[5] These two characteristics, courage and humility, appear elsewhere in his career. To be sure, he fled before Saul, and never would face him with weapons; but that was because Saul was the anointed of Yahweh[6] and the father of his devoted friend Jonathan.[7] He fled before Absalom, also, not because he was afraid, but because he could not bring himself to draw his sword against his own son and initiate a civil war.[8] His subjects thought him anything but a coward. Hushai, it will be remembered, warned Absalom not to be in too much haste to follow his father, "for," he said, "all Israel know that thy father is a mighty man";[9] and the young man heeded the warning. David did, however, now

[1] I Sam. 16:18.
[2] I Sam. 16:21.
[3] I Sam. 18:5.
[4] I Sam. 18:7.
[5] I Sam. 18:23; see also I Sam. 24:14, where David speaks of himself as "a dead dog" and "a flea," that is, beneath the king's notice.
[6] The story that David was anointed to displace Saul before the death of Samuel (I Sam. 16:1 ff.) belongs to a later date than the Judean narrative.
[7] I Sam. 24:6; II Sam. 4:10.
[8] II Sam. 15:14.
[9] II Sam. 17:10.

and then show a lack of the sturdy moral fiber that should characterize the genuine soldier, especially in his treatment of Joab, whom he allowed to go unpunished for the murder of Abner and Amasa.[1] He abhorred these vengeful and brutal deeds, but he confessed himself unable to reward the perpetrator of them as he deserved. "I am this day weak," said he, on the occasion of the death of Abner, "though anointed king, and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too hard for me." He could only leave the murderer in the hands of Yahweh to punish "according to his wickedness."[2] This confession is characteristic of him. He was naturally passionate and impulsive, but, when brought face to face with his errors or transgressions, he acknowledged them and uncomplainingly took the consequences. His conduct when Abigail appealed to him not to give way to ignoble resentment toward her churlish husband was worthy of a candidate for royalty,[3] and the humility with which he confessed his crimes against Uriah and submitted to the loss of the offspring of his adulterous passion made him the classic example of penitence in the Old Testament.[4] When there occurred a plague among his people, and his seer interpreted it as an indication of the divine disapproval on account of a census that he had recently taken, he made no protest, but quietly took upon himself all the blame for the infliction.[5]

There is little in the oldest stratum of the history of Solomon, as given in the first Book of Kings, that

[1] II Sam. 3:27; 20:10.
[2] II Sam. 3:39.
[3] I Sam. 25:32.
[4] II Sam. 12:13, 22.
[5] II Sam. 24:1 ff.

bears upon his private character, but the story of his vision at Gibeon[1] is significant, and almost equally so whether it is historical or legendary, since in either case it shows what a Hebrew toward the beginning of the monarchy thought should be the attitude of a king toward his office. It is hardly necessary to say that nothing could be more admirable or appropriate than the childlike spirit in which Solomon is here represented as approaching his high duties. Unfortunately he does not seem to have retained the same disposition long after his accession.

The ethical relations of the family do not seem to have been improved by the establishment of the monarchy. The position of woman was certainly no higher than it had been. The husband generally obtained his wife by a virtual purchase. The case of Michal, the daughter of Saul, as has already been intimated, was really no exception. David appears to have been strongly attached to her, for, when Abner proposed to desert Ishbaal and follow him, the king demanded that he bring Michal, who had been given by Saul to a certain Paltiel, with him[2] Yet he had other wives, some of whom he added to his family after her return. Among them were Abigail, with whom, after Nabal's death, he must have received a considerable fortune, and Maacah, a daughter of the chief of the Geshurites, to the south of Philistia,[3] with whom he had once been at war.[4] He had seven wives, including Michal, before

[1] I Kings 3:5 ff. [2] II Sam. 3:13 ff.

[3] According to II Sam. 15:8, Geshur was in Syria, but Josh. 13:2, like I Sam. 27:8, clearly points to a southern tribe.

[4] I Sam. 27:8; II Sam. 3:3.

he left Hebron, and when he removed to Jerusalem he took others, among them Bathsheba, besides at least eleven concubines.[1] Solomon inherited a part of this establishment and doubtless added to its numbers, but the earliest narrative has nothing to say on the subject.

It may safely be taken for granted that the subjects of David and Solomon were prompt to follow the royal example, and, as their wealth increased under a stable government, take to themselves wives as many as they could afford, thus increasing the evils by which polygamy is always accompanied. Some of these evils appear in the story. Thus, Bathsheba persuaded David to promise the succession to Solomon, her son, instead of Adonijah, the natural heir. Thereupon the latter undertook to usurp the throne. He failed, but his life was spared until he asked for one of his father's concubines, at which Solomon promptly ordered his execution.[2] David was preparing these things for himself and his family as he added wife to wife, but his biographer, so far from noting the fact, seems to have regarded him as fortunate and enviable in having so numerous a harem.

In this connection reference should be made to the story of Tamar, from which it appears that marriage between children of the same father, which is forbidden in Lev. 20:17, was then permissible.[3] This story is interesting, also, as showing that, in spite of polygamy, the promiscuous indulgence of lust was not countenanced. Indeed, the plea of Tamar for her own virtue strikes a new note, and one that touches the reader as does not

[1] II Sam. 11:27; 15:16; I Kings 1:3.

[2] I Kings 2:13. [3] II Sam. 13:13.

the wrath of her father or the vengeance of her brother Absalom. The same note is struck by Nathan when he comes to David with his exquisite parable.[1] It makes adultery not merely an injury to the property of a neighbor, but a wound to his honor and his tenderest affections, and stigmatizes the adulterer as a social marauder who has "no pity" and therefore deserves none.

David had the faults of an oriental father, being partial and indulgent beyond reason. He spoiled Absalom, and, when he was dead, made Solomon instead of Adonijah his favorite and successor. The rebellion of Absalom was one of the consequences, but so outrageous was the conduct of the son that he marred his own prospects and incurred the censure of mankind, while the weakness of the father was, and is, overlooked or forgiven.[2] The love of David for his children was not altogether a virtue. On the other hand, what could be more touching and admirable than the devotion of Rizpah, Saul's concubine, who, when the two sons she bore the unhappy king and the five of his daughter Merab were executed to placate the Gibeonites, took her place under the gibbet and sat there day and night the summer through to prevent the birds of heaven and the beasts of the field from devouring their decaying bodies.[3]

[1] II Sam. 12:1 ff.

[2] In the valley of the Kidron, east of Jerusalem, there is a monument erroneously called the "Tomb of Absalom." The base of it is heaped with stones that have been thrown at it by passers-by, who have thus sought to show their reprobation for a son who dishonored his father.

[3] II Sam. 21:10 f.

There is an interesting passage bearing on the subject of slavery in this period, namely II Sam. 12:31. It, like 8:2, which is late and doubtful, has been rendered and interpreted as a description of cruelties inflicted by order of David upon the prisoners taken at Rabbah; but the better rendering is that "he set them at the saws, and the picks, and the axes, and made them work at the brick-molds," that is, reduced them to slavery and employed them in various forms of hard labor. Many, if not most, of the slaves of the time, owing to the constant wars, were probably foreigners.

It is necessary, in passing to the social ethics of the period, as in preceding chapters to call attention to the disregard for truth that shows itself among all classes. Persons bent on wickedness naturally lie and deceive without compunction: Amnon, for example, when he was seeking his sister's ruin;[1] Absalom, when he was planning to avenge Tamar,[2] and when he was plotting the overthrow of his father;[3] and Zeba, the faithless steward of Meribbaal, when he saw an opportunity to rob his master.[4] Sometimes, also, persons otherwise reputable resorted to falsehood and deception when in danger or difficulty. Thus, the woman of Tekoa brought a fictitious complaint before David as a mask for a plea for Absalom;[5] Hushai made a pretense of devotion to Absalom for the purpose of defeating him;[6] Ahimaaz denied any knowledge of the death of Absalom through fear of the king;[7] and a woman at Bahurim

[1] II Sam. 13:6.
[2] II Sam. 13:23 ff.
[3] II Sam. 15:14.
[4] II Sam. 16:3.
[5] II Sam. 14:4 ff.
[6] II Sam. 16:16 ff.
[7] II Sam. 18:29.

saved David's emissaries by giving their pursuers false information.[1] David himself was not above such practices. He lied to Achish about his military movements;[2] he also made the king believe that he was eager to follow him against Saul;[3] but, worst of all, he called Uriah home on the pretense of wishing to hear from the army,[4] and, when the honest fellow, in spite of the wine with which he was plied, refused to fall into the trap laid for him, sent him back to Rabbah with what amounted to an order for his own execution;[5] and all this to cover the crime that he had committed against his innocent victim. It was a despicable piece of business, as the prophet Nathan saw and promptly testified; yet this man David was a very pattern of faithfulness to expressly accepted duties or obligations. His covenant with Jonathan has already been mentioned. He seems to have regarded it as comprehensive of the whole family of Saul. At any rate, during his whole career he treated all who belonged to it with the utmost kindness and consideration. He served Saul loyally while he was at court, and even in exile he did not forget that his enemy was Jonathan's father as well as the anointed of Yahweh. When Saul fell, and he was called to the throne, he interpreted the call as a divine commission, and acted accordingly; but when Ishbaal was assassinated and the conspirators came to David with the news of his death, expecting to be praised and rewarded for what they had done, the new king requited them with an immediate and ignominious death.[6] When he had established himself in Jerusalem

[1] II Sam. 17:20. [3] I Sam. 28:2; 29:8. [5] II Sam. 11:14 f.
[2] I Sam. 27:10. [4] II Sam. 11:6 ff. [6] II Sam. 4:9 ff.

he made inquiry whether there were any of Saul's family still remaining, and, when he learned that there was a son of Jonathan, a cripple, he sent for the young man, took him into his own family, and restored to him the land that had belonged to his grandfather Saul.[1] Later, when Zeba reported Meribbaal disloyal, he gave the property to the informer, and, when he discovered his mistake, because he had given his word to both, divided it between them.[2] There is one passage that, at first sight, seems to contradict the testimony of those already cited; namely, II Sam. 21:8 f., where David is reported to have delivered seven of the grandsons of Saul to the Gibeonites in atonement for a breach of the covenant between them and Israel. It must, however, be remembered that this action was taken because there was a famine in the land, which, according to the oracle, was "for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he put to death the Gibeonites"; so that the king could only have saved the unfortunate young men by disregarding the ancient law of retaliation backed by the alleged indorsement of Yahweh. In this connection should be mentioned, also, the fulfilment by David of his promise to Bathsheba to make her son Solomon his heir,[3] and his attempt to show his loyalty to Nahash the deceased king of Ammon by sending a message of condolence to his son.[4] In II Sam. 8:2 he is reported to have smitten Moab, although the king of that country had protected his parents while he was pursued by Saul;[5] but the passage in question

[1] II Sam. 9:1 ff.
[2] II Sam. 16:3 f.; 19:24 ff.
[3] II Kings 1:28 ff.
[4] II Sam. 10:2 ff.
[5] I Sam. 22:3 f.

is a Deuteronomic accretion of doubtful authenticity, and II Sam. 8:11 f., where Moab is reckoned among the kingdoms subdued by David is still later. The truth, then, seems to be that David spared Moab, as he would have spared Ammon, because the king of the country had befriended him when he was persecuted.[1]

The oldest sources represent David throughout as the soul of good-will. This characteristic explains why, when he was banished from court, the unfortunate of every description flocked to him;[2] why his companions in arms unhesitatingly risked their lives to protect,[3] or even to pleasure him;[4] and why, when he fled before Absalom, his people in great numbers accompanied him,[5] his foreign soldiers refused to desert him,[6] and Hebrews and Gentiles alike on the east of the Jordan came to his assistance.[7]

The last citation suggests that David was not only kind and generous, but rarely magnanimous. His conduct toward Saul while the latter was seeking to kill him was above praise. It brought tears to the king's own eyes, and forced from him the confession, "Thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rendered to me good, whereas I have rendered to thee evil. . . . . For, if a man meet his enemy, will he let him go unharmed?"[8] He overlooked, at Abigail's interces-

[1] Lest it should be thought that II Sam. 23:20 has been overlooked, note that this passage is corrupt, and that the original reading was not "he slew two *sons of* Ariel of Moab," but "he slew the two young lions in their lair."

[2] I Sam. 22:2.

[3] II Sam. 18:3; 21:15 ff.

[4] II Sam. 23:13 ff.

[5] II Sam. 15:17.

[6] II Sam. 15:18 ff.

[7] II Sam. 17:27 ff.

[8] I Sam. 24:16 ff.

sion, the insolence of Nabal,[1] ignored, in spite of his attendants, the vituperation of Shimei,[2] and mourned for Absalom as tenderly as if the heartless young man had been the best and most dutiful of sons.[3] This phase of David's character would be somewhat marred if I Kings 2:1–12 were a part of the original story of the king's life. Such, however, is not the case. He must therefore be acquitted of any share in the death of Adonijah, Abiathar, Joab, or Shimei, and the responsibility for their punishment placed upon Solomon, whom the first three, and possibly the last, also, would have kept from the throne.[4]

The spirit of David is shown in the way in which he met the advances of Abner, when the latter proposed to reunite the tribes,[5] and in his attempt to put Amasa, who had led Absalom's troops, at the head of a united army, for the sake of bringing the men of Judah back to their allegiance.[6] The same spirit manifests itself in the laudatory terms used of Joseph in the so-called "Blessing of Jacob," which is supposed to have taken substantially its present form in the reign of David.[7] It was the possession and exercise of this spirit that made it possible for the aged king to return to Jerusalem and finally die the recognized ruler of all Israel.

It is difficult to reconcile these attractive and highly commendable traits in David with his military record and the slaughter he wrought in his operations, sometimes showing no mercy even to women and children. Thus, in his forays into the South, before he became

[1] I Sam. 25:35 ff. [2] II Sam. 16:5 ff. [3] II Sam. 18:33.
[4] The Shimei of I Kings 1:8 is not the one of 2:8.
[5] II Sam. 3:12. [6] II Sam. 19:13; 20:4 f. [7] Gen. 49:22 ff.

king, he is said to have "saved neither man nor woman alive,"[1] and when he invaded Edom to have "cut off every male."[2] It should, however, be remembered to his credit that, as appears from the severity with which he condemned Joab for avenging upon Abner the blood of his reckless brother[3] and punished the shameless murderers of his rival Ishbaal,[4] he took no delight in blood, and that the wars in which he engaged were mostly forced upon him either by the fallen house of Saul or hereditary foreign enemies who threatened his people with slavery or extinction. Joab is the typical man of blood of the period; but, as already shown, David had only criticism and condemnation for his brutal methods.

Thus far David has been considered as a popular hero, and not as the head of a state. He was, in fact, owing to the sad fate of the son of Kish, the founder of the Hebrew monarchy, and for many years bodied it forth to the oriental world. It is unfortunate that there is not a more complete record of his reign, showing how he conducted the internal affairs of his kingdom, and the result to his admiring subjects; but those who compiled the Books of Samuel were more interested in other matters, and one who desires such information must seek it in occasional incidents and the conditions that they imply. There are three or four such incidents that are very instructive.

The Hebrew state was an absolute monarchy, and the king had the reins of government entirely in his own hands. He made laws and executed them. He was

[1] I Sam. 27:9.
[2] II Sam. 8:13 f.; 1 Kings 11:15.
[3] II Sam. 3:28 f.
[4] II Sam. 4:12.

also the final authority, both on the validity of the laws and any alleged violation of them. There was one qualification, therefore, that he needed above all others, the one for which Solomon prayed at Gibeon, saying, "Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able [otherwise] to judge this thy great people?"[1] A later writer (D) in II Sam. 8:15 says that David "executed justice and righteousness to all his people." A little further study will show whether this estimate of him is well founded.

There is a significant incident, the first that will be cited, in the account of the defeat and overthrow by David of the Amalekites who had captured and plundered Ziklag in his absence.[2] He had six hundred men with him when he returned and found the place deserted. He at once started in pursuit, but the pace he set was so rapid that, when he reached the brook Besor, a third of his men were so nearly exhausted that they could go no farther.[3] Leaving them there, he pushed forward with the remainder. He finally overtook the marauders, and not only rescued the captives and recovered the plunder taken at Ziklag, but secured additional spoil in great abundance. A part of this David reserved for himself, the rest being intended for his followers. When, however, the victors returned to the brook Besor, and a distribution was proposed, some of them objected to sharing their winnings with the two hundred who were there encamped. Thereupon David intervened. "Who," he indignantly inquired, "will hearken to you in this matter? for as

[1] I Kings 3:9. [2] I Sam., chap. 30. [3] Vss. 9 f.

is his share that went down to the battle, so shall be his share that tarried by the baggage; they shall share alike." This is a remarkable deliverance, and the author adds to its significance by saying, "And from that day onward he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel." It means that before he came to the throne David established a principle among his men which, when applied to civil affairs, would secure to every loyal subject of his realm equality of privilege before the law.

When David finally succeeded Saul he followed the immemorial practice of oriental rulers and sat as judge to hear and decide any cases that might be brought before him. The impression that one gets from II Sam. 15:1 ff. is that such appeals were frequent, and that those who brought them came from all parts of the kingdom. Absalom is represented as saying that there was no adequate provision for the administration of justice at the capital; but a son who was plotting to dethrone his own father can hardly be regarded as a reliable witness to existing conditions. Besides, there is evidence that David was approachable by the humblest suitor. There are two examples of his method and insight, which, although the cases brought were fictitious, are as instructive as if they had been genuine. The first is the one embodied in Nathan's parable.[1] The prophet complained that a rich man who had flocks and herds very many, when he wanted a lamb to set before a chance guest, instead of taking one of his own took a pet animal, and an only one, belonging to a poor neighbor and served it to the stranger. Hardly was

[1] II Sam. 12:1 ff.

the case stated before the king, greatly enraged, cried, "As Yahweh liveth, the man that hath done this is worthy to die; as for the lamb, he shall restore it fourfold,[1] because he did this thing and because he had no pity." This, too, is a remarkable decision. The prophet could not have desired one more emphatic or satisfactory. It not only establishes the indefeasible right of property, but requires of the rich such an attitude toward the poor as would eventually abolish poverty in any community in which it was adopted. Solomon ignored this great principle, but it had come to stay, and it finally wrecked the arbitrary and oppressive system that he in his wisdom had elaborated.

The other example[2] is more complicated. It deals with the application of the *lex talionis*, the custom, first alluded to in Gen. 4:14, which authorized the next of kin to avenge the death of a relative by himself killing the slayer. Joab took advantage of this law when he stabbed Abner, who had recently, but unwillingly, killed Asahel, Joab's brother, in battle.[3] The grief and indignation of the king, when he heard of the matter, showed that he had no sympathy with this barbarous custom. Joab, therefore, must have been pretty sure of his case before the woman from Tekoa presented it. She declared that she had had two sons, that they had quarreled, and one of them had killed the other; and that her relatives now demanded the blood of the survivor, thus threatening to leave her childless and her husband without an heir to perpetuate his family. The problem was a perplexing one, and the

[1] The Greek Version reads "fivefold."

[2] II Sam. 14:4 ff. [3] II Sam. 2:19 ff.

king at first hesitated to render a decision. An Oriental does not lightly break with custom. The woman, however, persisted and he finally gave her his oath that her son should be protected. Later he applied the same principle, that justice should not defeat its own object, to the case of Absalom, and ordered Joab to bring the young man home from exile.[1]

These decisions are merely examples, but they display an insight and sympathy that led the woman of Tekoa to compare David with "the angel of God" in his ability "to discern good and bad,"[2] and that move the modern reader to only less extravagant admiration. Compare the famous judgment of Solomon,[3] which is not a lesson in ethics but an experiment in psychology.

The presence of foreigners in the Hebrew army has more than once in the foregoing discussion received passing notice. The subject deserves further attention. The impression one gets from reading the life of Saul is that he was almost constantly at war with his neighbors. This is not the case with respect to David. He, too, had some serious encounters with other peoples, especially the Philistines, but, when the contents of II Samuel are chronologically arranged, it will be found that these all took place early in his reign.[4] He was

[1] II Sam. 14:21. [2] II Sam. 14:17.

[3] I Kings, 3:16 ff., a comparatively late passage.

[4] The order adopted by Budde for the extracts from the Judean narrative is as follows: 1:1–4, 11 f., 17, 18b, 18a, 19–27; 2:1–9, 10b, 12–23a, 24–32; 3:1, 6b–29, 31–39; 4:1–3, 5–12; 5:1–3, 17–25; 21:15–22; 23:8–12, 17b–22, 23b–39, 13–17a; 6:1; 5:6 (except "thinking . . . . hither"), 7a, 8a, 9–12; 6:2–23; 8:7–19, 13–14a; 3:2–5; 5:13–16; 8:16–18; 24:1b–10, 11b–12, 13 ("Shall . . . . pestilence in thy land"). 11a, 13 ("So . . . . unto him"—"now . . . . me"), 14 f., 16 ("And . . . .

always on friendly terms with the Moabites, among whom he left his parents when their safety was threatened by Saul;[1] also with the Ammonites, until their king provoked him to war,[2] and the Phoenicians.[3] Even with those against whom he had fought he afterward established peaceful relations. Thus, the king of Geshur gave him his daughter, afterward the mother of Absalom, in marriage[4] and Shobi of Ammon was among those who furnished him with supplies when he was fleeing before Absalom.[5] As for the Philistines, although, according to all accounts, he fought and subdued some or all of them, he did not disturb Achish, with whom he once found refuge for more than a year,[6] for this prince was still ruling in Gath when Solomon became king.[7] Moreover, he had many Philistines in his army, including six hundred from Gath under a certain Ittai.[8] And they were not mere mercenaries. Said Ittai, when David would have dismissed him on leaving Jerusalem, "Wherever my lord the king is, whether for death or for life, even there also will thy

destroy it"), 17, 16 ("Yahweh . . . . Jebusite"), 18–25; 21:1–2a, 3 ("What . . . . Yahweh"), 4–6, 8, 9 (except "at . . . . harvest"), 10–14; 9:1–3; 4:4b; 9:4–13; 10; 11:1–20, 21b–22a, 24a, 22b, 24b–27; 12:1–7a, 9 ("thou hast . . . . Ammon"), 13–31; 13:1–17, 18b–36, 37b, 37a, 38b; 14:1–24, 28–33; 15:1–23, 24 (except "and all the Levites with him"—"the covenant of"—"and Abiathar went up"), 25–37; 16; 17; 18; 19:1, 3–5, 2, 6–11, 12b, 12a, 13–44; 20:1–22. See *Sacred Books of The Old Testament*, "Samuel."

[1] I Sam. 22:3 f.

[2] II Sam. 10:1 ff.

[3] II Sam. 5:11.

[4] II Sam. 3:3.

[5] II Sam. 17:27.

[6] I Sam. 27:2 ff.

[7] I Kings 2:29.

[8] See II Sam. 15:18, where the better reading is not "all the Gittites," but "all the men of Ittai the Gittite."

servant be."[1] So these foreigners went with the king across the Jordan and helped to win the battle by which he saved his crown. There were others among his mighty men, of whom Uriah the Gittite, whom he betrayed,[2] Eliphelet of Maacah,[3] Igal of Zobah,[4] and Zelek the Ammonite[5] are mentioned by name. All these items go to show that neither David nor the Hebrews generally in his time had any appreciable prejudice against foreigners. There is another that is even more significant, namely, that when the accident that prevented David from bringing the ark to Jerusalem on the first attempt occurred, he left it on the way, and the man who had the honor of caring for it was Obed-edom, a Gittite.[6] Now, nothing could have shocked a later Hebrew more than such a disposition of it. The Chronicler would not believe the story. He therefore made Obed-edom a Hebrew and bestowed upon him the office of door-keeper to the sanctuary of Yahweh.[7] The Hebrews of David's day, on the other hand, had no such antipathy to friendly foreigners, but welcomed them, as Moses did Hobab, to the blessings that they enjoyed, or hoped to enjoy, from Yahweh.[8]

[1] II Sam. 15:21.
[2] II Sam. 23:39.
[3] II Sam. 23:34.
[4] II Sam. 23:36.
[5] II Sam. 23:37.
[6] II Sam. 6:10.
[7] I Chron. 15:18.
[8] II Sam. 6:11.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST CENTURY OF THE SEPARATE KINGDOMS

On the death of Solomon there was a great upheaval the result of which was the separation of the northern tribes from that of Judah. The Southern Kingdom was still ruled by the house of David, but the Northern Kingdom chose for its king Jeroboam, son of Nebat, who had served as superintendent of forced labor in Ephraim, but had been suspected of disloyalty by Solomon and obliged to seek refuge in Egypt. The line of succession remained unbroken in Judah, but in Israel, as the Northern Kingdom was called, after only twenty-two years, the house of Jeroboam I was overthrown by Baasha, and in twenty-six more the dynasty founded by the latter gave place to that of Omri, which maintained itself until 842 B.C., or the close of the period.

The rupture that gave rise to the separate kingdoms left them both too weak to cope with any other at all formidable power. Sheshonk I, king of Egypt (945–924 B.C.), was prompt to take advantage of this fact to invade and plunder the one after the other; and, as if this were not enough, the resentment between them more than once brought them into open hostility with each other and increased their wretchedness. It was only after the overthrow of the house of Baasha that Jehoshaphat of Judah "made peace with the king of Israel." Then, however, arose the religious conflict in which Elijah and Elisha led the adherents of Yahweh

and finally succeeded in overthrowing the dynasty of Omri and a little later effecting almost as drastic reforms in the kingdom of Judah.

This, in outline, is the politico-religious history of the period. It remains to trace the line of ethical development, if there was any, while the events mentioned were occurring. This is not so easy as might be expected, the sources on which one has to depend having been rewrought to such an extent that it is difficult to distinguish fact from legend. The legendary appears especially in the stories of the prophets. The clearest case is in I Kings, chap. 13, where the mention of Josiah by name at least a hundred and seventy years before he was born,[1] and of Israel as Samaria more than thirty-five before the city so called was founded[2] shows that the story in its present form is a late production. Yet it contains elements that must have originated in the period of which it treats and may be used for the purpose of obtaining an idea of ethical conditions in those earlier times.

The most prominent figure of the period is, without question, Elijah. He enters unannounced.[3] Perhaps the original account of him had something to say with reference to his parentage and earlier activities, but the present text is silent on the subject. He is described simply as coming from Tishbe,[4] a place somewhere in Gilead. His appearance was as impressive as it was abrupt. He revealed himself at once in his full stature, the stature of a moral if not a physical giant. He

[1] Vs. 2. [2] Vs. 32. [3] I Kings 17:1.

[4] The received text has "of the sojourners," the result of attaching the wrong vowels to the consonants of the above name.

appeared at an opportune moment. The Hebrew religion needed a champion. He evidently felt called to this high office. During his whole career he never failed to respond in any emergency. His first duty was a trial of his courage. He seems to have been a peasant, with a figure whose uncouthness was emphasized by the mantle of skins with which he was clothed. Yet it was his to appear before a powerful king with a very unwelcome message, and he did so without flinching. "As Yahweh the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand," he thundered, "there shall not be dew or rain three years, except according to my word," then, as suddenly as he came, he disappeared.

His next meeting with Ahab was equally dramatic. The country was suffering severely from drought, and the king was seeking everywhere for water, at the same time making inquiry for the man whom he held responsible for the infliction. Finally Elijah appeared and allowed Obadiah to announce him to Ahab. The king, forgetting in his anger his anxiety for his people, greeted him as the "troubler of Israel."[1] The prophet, nothing daunted, not only turned the reproach upon his assailant, but boldly challenged him and Jezebel's prophets to a test of the rival claims of Baal and Yahweh. The details of the contest may not be historical, but there can be little doubt that there was a serious one and that Elijah emerged from it victorious. Then he disappeared again, but only to reappear, when Ahab, at the instigation of Jezebel, had murdered Naboth and appropriated his vineyard, to denounce the outrage, and predict, as a penalty, the speedy overthrow of the reigning dynasty.

[1] I Kings 18:16.

This portrait of Elijah is an inspiring one, but there are good reasons for believing that it is not greatly overdone; one of them being that it harmonizes with what is known of the genuine prophets of Yahweh from the most reliable sources. There were others in this period who were only less admirable. The one whose name first suggests itself is Elijah's disciple and successor, Elisha. His character is revealed in the reply he made when Elijah gave him permission to prefer a last request. "I pray thee," said he, "let a double [the firstborn's] portion of thy spirit be upon me."[1] It is not necessary to present in detail the evidence that his prayer was answered. He also stood before kings and with no less boldness than his master declared "the whole counsel of God."[2]

There is another of like spirit who is easily overlooked, namely, Micaiah, the son of Imlah. He it was whom Ahab summoned, when he was trying to persuade Jehoshaphat to join him in an expedition against Ramoth Gilead,[3] although he hated the prophet, because, as he naïvely explained, he did not prophesy good concerning him and his kingdom, but evil. When Micaiah came he repeated the offense, declaring that, if the expedition were undertaken, the allies would be defeated and scattered.[4] This incident is especially interesting and instructive because the false prophets are here introduced for the first time, and the fearless honesty of Micaiah is contrasted with the timid servility of the four hundred who, to please Ahab and fill their own bellies, unanimously approved the enterprise.

[1] II Kings 2:9.

[2] II Kings 3:13 ff.; 6:32 ff.; 8:7 ff.; 13:7 ff.

[3] I Kings 22:1 ff.

[4] I Kings 22:17.

Such were the more intimate characteristics of these men of God. Others will be mentioned, each in its proper connection.

There is little to be said on the ethics of the family as viewed in this period. The position of woman seems to have been about the same as in earlier times. It was always possible for a peculiarly gifted woman to free herself to a greater or less extent from the trammels of custom and prejudice. This time it is one far different in character from Deborah, namely Jezebel, the Phoenician wife of Ahab. There are various indications that the king was a man of ability and of naturally generous impulses. In matters of religion, however, he seems to have given the queen a free hand. Thus, she was allowed to cut off many of the prophets of Yahweh,[1] and drive even Elijah from the country.[2] It was she, also, who managed the case of Naboth, and, acting in the king's name, brought about the stubborn vintner's death. There were, however, probably few women as able and influential as she in her day, or so cruelly fanatical. There certainly is no evidence of any sympathy with or for her in the sacred records.

The only other "great woman" who is mentioned is the Shunamite who entertained Elisha when he passed through her village. She also is a commanding figure, but her strength of character, in all its manifestations, is so thoroughly womanly that it seems only manly in her husband and chivalrous in the king to further her wishes.[3]

There are a couple of passages that throw some light upon slavery as practiced among the Hebrews of this

[1] I Kings 18:4, 13. [2] I Kings 19:2 f. [3] II Kings 4:9 f; 8:1 ff.

period and their neighbors. The first is II Kings 4:1 ff., where the story is told of a poor widow who came to Elisha to tell him that a man whom she owed was on the point of taking her two children in payment of the debt. The prophet, it is said, sympathized with her, but instead of protesting against enslavement for debt, he wrought a miracle to satisfy the creditor; a solution which reminds one of Paul's treatment of the case of Onesimus.[1] The other passage is II Kings 5:42 ff., where the interest of the little Hebrew maid in the recovery of her Syrian master, Naaman, indicates that sometimes, at least, the relation between masters and slaves was one of reciprocal kindness.

In the field of social ethics there is more abundant and diversified material.

In the first place there are two interesting passages bearing on the indifference of the Hebrews to the truth. There are more cases of lying; for example, I Kings 20:39 f., and II Kings 5:20 ff. and 8:14; but these two are especially significant because they might be interpreted as justifying falsehood. The first is in I Kings, chap. 13. The story here told says that a prophet was sent from Judah to curse the altar at Bethel, being instructed not to eat or drink in the place. He therefore declined an invitation from the king; but when a resident prophet professed to have received a message revoking these instructions, he allowed himself to be deceived, whereupon his deceiver sentenced him to death for disobedience of Yahweh. This story shocks the modern reader. He cannot conceive of one prophet as tempting another to his death. The Hebrews,

[1] Philem. vss. 10 ff.

however, could. They did not, it will be remembered, attribute actual guilt to the serpent for tempting Eve.[1] Indeed, they went farther and represented Yahweh himself as sometimes authorizing falsehood. This is perfectly clear from the second illustration. It is in the story of Micaiah already cited.[2] This prophet, in explaining the unanimity of his opponents, said that they approved the expedition to Ramoth Gilead because Yahweh had put "a lying spirit" into all their mouths, that they might "entice" the king to his destruction. The idea seems to have been that it was not immoral to misrepresent things so long as the tempter used only his wits and the tempted remained free in his choice of action; which was the Hebrew way of saying that temptation might explain, but did not excuse, wrong-doing.

This was the ancient and popular view, but it does not seem to have been the teaching of Elijah and Elisha. Indeed, one may fairly say that the latter condemned lying when he rebuked and severely punished his servant Gehazi for obtaining money and other valuables from Naaman under false pretenses.[3] At any rate, from this time onward the truth is treated with increasing reverence. A false oath, as has been shown, was always abhorrent to the Hebrews. It is therefore not strange to find the witnesses against Naboth characterized as "base fellows" and creatures of the infamous Jezebel.[4]

At this point attention should be called to a phase of the struggle in which Elijah and Elisha were engaged.

[1] Gen., chap. 3.
[2] I Kings, chap. 22.
[3] II Kings 5:24 ff.
[4] I Kings 21:9 f.

The struggle itself was only a continuation of the irrepressible conflict between Yahwism and other religions. It had been acute in the time of Saul, when the enemies of the God of the Hebrews were an alien race, the Philistines. It was renewed with equal virulence when Ahab took to wife the Phoenician princess Jezebel and permitted her to practice and propagate the worship of Baal among his people. The struggle thus became an internal one, with Hebrews in both parties.

There was another difference, namely, that, whereas in the days of Saul the Hebrews admitted the reality of other divinities than Yahweh, and the legitimacy of the worship of these gods by other peoples, Elijah at Carmel issued the challenge, "How long will ye go limping between divided opinions? if Yahweh be God, follow him; but if Baal, follow him." In other words he brought home to his people most forcibly the question whether there was any other God than Yahweh. He, of course, took the negative, and the assembled multitude in the end indorsed his contention, shouting, "Yahweh, he is God; Yahweh, he is God."[1] At the same time, since Elijah was careful to identify this the true and only God with the God of the patriarchs,[2] they realized that the declaration they had made was nothing short of a renewal of the covenant with their fathers. Thus, the religious movement headed by Elijah acquired an ethical character, which was imparted to the zeal, sometimes more neurotic than either moral or religious, of the rank and file of the prophets who called themselves by the name of Yahweh. The story

[1] I Kings 18:21, 39. [2] I Kings 18:36.

of Micaiah shows how imperfectly they represented the God whose champions they professed to be. Still, it was to their credit that they were loyal to the national deity as compared with those who, forgetting the covenant with the fathers, either deserted him entirely or attempted to serve both him and Baal.

In a preceding chapter stress was laid on the principle enunciated by David in the case brought before him by the prophet Nathan, but the breadth of its application was only vaguely suggested. David, in whom generosity was a prominent characteristic, seems generally to have recognized it. Solomon, on the other hand, as already intimated, ignored it. He greatly enlarged and beautified his capital[1] and maintained a luxurious and extravagant court,[2] but, in order to meet the expense of these developments, he was obliged to introduce systematic and onerous taxation, and even employ forced labor.[3] He was able, sometimes by the use of arbitrary means, to enforce this policy during his lifetime, but the people were restive under it, and, when he finally died, they lost no time in giving unmistakable expression to their dissatisfaction.[4] They did so in the assembly called to ratify the accession of Rehoboam at Shechem. At the same time they asked Rehoboam to make the "grievous service" they had done under his father somewhat "lighter." This was a very modest demand, as the king's aged advisers told him, but he rejected their advice and followed that of the reckless companions of his youth. "My little finger," replied the heartless young braggart, "is thicker than my father's

[1] I Kings 6:15 ff.
[2] I Kings 5:22 f., 26.
[3] I Kings 5:13 f.
[4] I Kings 12:4.

loins.[1] My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chastened you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." Then arose the old cry of the northern tribesmen, "To your tents, O Israel,"[2] and, as soon as a separate assembly could be called, Jeroboam, who had been a thorn in the flesh to Solomon, was chosen "king over all Israel."[3]

The revolt of the northern tribes was a protest against the abuse of royal authority. Since Jeroboam was chosen as its head, he must have sympathized with the principle involved and must have given his followers reason to believe that he would not disregard it. The length of his reign favors the supposition that he did not disappoint them. To be sure, later authorities accuse him of falling short of the standard set by David, but it will be found that the specific charges against him relate only to his attitude toward the worship of Yahweh, especially as practiced at Jerusalem, and not to his treatment of his subjects. The same is true in the cases of the other northern kings except Ahab. He is not only accused by a late writer of having done "more to provoke Yahweh, the God of Israel, than all the kings of Israel that were before him," but by an earlier, in the story to which reference has twice already been made, of having violated the most sacred rights of an innocent subject. This incident, however, must not be misinterpreted. It is not the murder of Naboth that is significant in this connection, but the attitude

[1] These words appear only in I Kings 12:10, but they should evidently be repeated in vs. 14. According to H. P. Smith, *Old Testament History*, 178, they were all that the king used, the rest being editorial.

[2] II Sam. 20:1. [3] I Kings 12:16, 18 ff.

of Ahab and others to the deed. In the first place, it was not done by Ahab or at his suggestion, but by his wife, because, much as he wanted the vineyard, he had scruples about taking it by force.[1] Secondly, no sooner was the death of Naboth known than Elijah appeared on the scene and as boldly and severely arraigned him as Nathan did David, and with a similar result.[2] Thirdly, it is evident that this crime aroused intense popular indignation, and that the revolution which speedily followed was hastened, if not occasioned, by it.[3] These facts show that in the reign of Ahab there was no lack of healthy moral reaction in Israel when the rights of the individual were seriously violated.

In the story of Naboth Elijah appears in the rôle of judge or censor. There are other passages more or less legendary in which both he and Elisha are represented as acting in a manner that the modern reader cannot but condemn as cruel;[4] yet the general impression one gets from reading the traditions with reference to them is that they were not only ardent patriots, seeking the best interests of their people as a whole, but centers of beneficence to those, especially the unfortunate, with whom they came into personal contact.[5]

The question concerning the attitude of the Hebrews toward strangers and foreigners in this period is somewhat complicated. The almost constant strife between the kingdoms of Israel and Syria would naturally induce latent hostility toward foreigners of all nations. It did not, however, at first seriously disturb the hitherto

[1] I Kings 21:4.
[2] I Kings 21:27 ff.
[3] II Kings 9:23 f., 35 f.
[4] II Kings 1:9 f.; 2:23 f.
[5] I Kings 17:8 ff.; 2 Kings 2:19 ff.; 4:1 ff. ,etc.

friendly relations between the Hebrews of both kingdoms and the Phoenicians. Indeed, the marriage of Ahab to a daughter of the king of the Sidonians,[1] and of Jehoram of Judah to her daughter,[2] indicates that the two peoples were never more intimate. It is one thing, however, to tolerate a neighbor on his own ground and quite another to admit him to a position of influence and authority among one's own people. At any rate, the prophets Elijah and Elisha were hostile to Jezebel, because she did not obey the injunction to forget her own people and her father's house,[3] but brought her religion with her to plague the worshipers of Yahweh; and there is evidence that the revolution under Jehu was a religious as well as a political movement. This is perfectly clear from the facts, that as soon as the impetuous soldier had removed Joram and his mother, he proceeded to extirpate Baalism at Samaria, and that, on his way thither, he was joined by Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, who represented the most fanatical of the worshipers of Yahweh.[4] Note, also, that it was the priests, with the assistance, it is true, of the foreign guard, who afterward deposed Athaliah and placed her grandson on the throne of Judah.[5] In the former case the revolution was attended with so much bloodshed that the zeal of the participants is more than offset by their cruelty.[6]

[1] I Kings 16:31. [2] II Kings 8:18.

[3] See Ps. 45:10, which has by some exegetes been supposed to refer to Jezebel.

[4] II Kings 10:15 ff.; Jer. 35:6 ff.

[5] II Kings 11:4 ff. [6] II Kings 10:18 ff.

CHAPTER VIII

AMOS AND HIS TIMES

The revolution in Israel in 843 B.C. had its echo in Judah, but, for the time being, the party favorable to foreigners, and their ideas and practices, triumphed; for no sooner did Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah the king, hear that he as well as Jehoram had died by the hand of Jehu than, with a cruel energy worthy of her mother Jezebel, she "destroyed all the seed royal" on whom she could lay her hands and herself took possession of the government; and it was only after six years that it was possible to dethrone her. Then there was a counter revolution as the result of which Joash, the only surviving son of Ahaziah, came into his inheritance. From that time the succession was undisturbed in Judah, the kings of this period being only three in number, Joash, Amasiah, and Uzziah. Meanwhile the kings of Israel, all of whom belonged to the same dynasty, were Jehu himself, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, and Jeroboam II.

In the earlier part of the period the northern tribes continued their struggle with the Syrians, with varying fortunes. At one time, when Shalmaneser II, to whom Jehu was paying tribute, was occupied elsewhere, the Syrian usurper Hazael was able, not only to ravage the country east of the Jordan, but to force his way down the coast of the Mediterranean and threaten Jerusalem.[1] Finally, however, the Assyrians under Ramman-nirari III reappeared and made the Syrians, as well as their

[1] II Kings 10:32 f.; 12:17 f.; Amos 1:3.

neighbors, tributary. From this time onward Israel, first under Jehoash, and then under Jeroboam II, prospered, until they could boast that they had recovered all that they had previously lost.[1] Meanwhile Amasiah of Judah had reconquered Edom,[2] and then, on account of an unsuccessful war with Jehoash, abdicated in favor of his wiser and more fortunate son Uzziah.[3] Thus, at the end of the period both kingdoms were in a more prosperous condition than they had been since they became separate.

There is very little in the Books of Kings that is of importance in this connection, the compiler having evidently taken greater interest in the political and strictly religious, than in the ethical, history of his people. Fortunately, however, there is another source, the Book of Amos, in which a contemporary has left a speaking record of the moral condition of the Northern Kingdom, and his own efforts to improve it about 760 B.C.

The importance of Amos in any discussion of the ethics of the Old Testament is universally recognized. He not only teaches morality and condemns its opposite, but insists that one cannot please Yahweh without observing the ethical requirements growing out of man's nature and environment. This is more or less clearly put in several passages. In one of these[4] he makes very effective use of irony. "Come," he says, "to Bethel—to transgress! At Gilgal—multiply transgression! Yea; bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days; and burn a thank-offering

[1] II Kings 14:25.
[2] II Kings 14:7.
[3] II Kings 14:17.
[4] Amos 4:4 f.

of unleavened bread, and proclaim, publish, free-will offerings; for thus ye love to do, children of Israel, saith the Lord Yahweh." It is clear that the prophet here means to say that the zeal of Israel in making the round of the popular sanctuaries and presenting there their tithes and sacrifices was not only useless as a religious practice, but positively offensive to the Deity. The same thought is even more forcibly expressed in 5:21 ff., where, after asserting the worthlessness of feasts and offerings, he gives his own idea of religion. Speaking for Yahweh, he says, "I hate, I despise, your feasts, and I take no delight in your festivals. For, when ye offer to me your burnt offerings and vegetable offerings, I am not pleased, and I regard not the fatlings, your peace offerings. Away from me with the noise of thy songs, and let me not hear the sound of thy psalteries; but let justice roll like water, and righteousness like a living stream." Then he adds an argument precisely parallel to that used by Paul in Rom. 4:10 ff.: "Did ye bring to me sacrifices in the desert forty years, house of Israel?" The question, of course, is equivalent to a denial that the Hebrews observed such rites during the Exodus, and by implication that, as popularly believed, they were an essential element in religion. His own conviction is expressed in the exhortation he here inserts, "Let justice," etc., but he puts it more broadly when he complains that they to whom he was sent "know not how to do right,"[1] and again when he exhorts them to "hate evil and love good," with the hope that Yahweh may yet be "gracious to a remnant" of their number.

[1] Amos 3:10.

Amos in his day had occasion to dwell on the subject of personal morality. It was, as has been noted, a time of prosperity for the Hebrews, especially of the Northern Kingdom. Jeroboam II, who was then king, had warred successfully, and in this and other ways added greatly to the wealth of his people; and wealth had brought with it the train of vices by which it is usually accompanied. These the prophet by turns condemns or ridicules. He was offended by the idle luxury that prevailed, pronouncing a woe upon those "who lie on ivory couches, yea, stretched upon their divans, eating lambs from the flock, and calves from the midst of the stall; who twitter to the note of the psaltery, think that for them, as for David, are instruments of music; who drink wine from basins, and anoint themselves with the choicest of oils, but are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph."[1] He accuses these voluptuaries of making their religious observances occasions for drunkenness.[2] He finds the women guilty of equally objectionable excesses. He calls them kine of Bashan, and describes them as calling on their cruel and oppressive husbands to furnish their feasts from the proceeds of extortion.[3] Finally, he charges that these wine-bibbers, not content with degrading themselves, corrupt the nazirites by persuading them to break their vow of abstinence.[4] The last citation does not prove that Amos himself was an ascetic, but it is pretty clear from them all, taken in connection with the general tone of the book, that he condemned any form of excess. It is not surprising, therefore, to find in his indictment

[1] Amos 6:3 ff; also 3:15.
[2] Amos 2:8.
[3] Amos 4:1.
[4] Amos 2:12.

of Israel the charge that "a man and his father go unto the maiden," that is, that the men of Israel, young and old, practiced impurity.[1] "The maiden" is here, no doubt, the religious prostitute of the Canaanite shrine, but from the context it is evident that Amos meant to teach that lust in itself, like intemperance, was offensive to Yahweh.

The prophet says little that can be interpreted as applying to the family. Perhaps, however, the charges against the Philistines[2] should be cited in this connection. Hitherto slavery has been recognized as an existing institution and tacitly permitted; but here Gaza is severely condemned for leading captive a whole population,[3] and the case of Moab[4] warrants the belief that the prophet would have been equally severe if the people enslaved had not been Hebrews.

In the field of social ethics, as will appear, Amos marks a distinct advance. One wishes that he had expressed himself on the subject of falsehood. If he had, he would hardly have condoned it as did the earlier Hebrews.

He expresses himself clearly and strongly on the kindred subject of honesty in business.[5] The Hebrews of his time, it seems, at least in Israel, had the same faults as tradesmen that are now common in the Orient. He describes them as adepts in the familiar tricks for cheating unwary customers, selling light grain, measured in a scant ephah, at an unjust price,

[1] Amos 2:6. [2] Amos 1:6.

[3] In vss. 19 f. a similar charge is brought against Tyre, but the genuineness of this passage is questioned.

[4] Amos 2:1 ff. [5] Amos 8:5 ff.

weighed in false balances. Such rascality, he tells them plainly, cannot but bring upon them the direst calamities and final destruction as a nation.

The quality on which Amos lays most stress is justice. The wealth of the rich in Israel was evidently not all gained in war or legitimate business. Nor did those who were in pursuit of gain confine themselves to the devices of tricky tradesmen. They employed other means which the discourses of Amos are largely devoted to exposing and denouncing. In the indictment already partially quoted he charges that "they sell for money the guiltless, and the needy for a pair of shoes"; that is, as magistrates they condemn an innocent man for as little as would buy a pair of shoes. Further, he says, "the wine of such as have been fined they drink," spend the money collected from persons unjustly fined for the wine they drink in their orgies.[1] In 2:9 f. the Philistines and the Egyptians are summoned to witness the oppression rampant in Samaria by which its nobles have filled their palaces. In 5:10 the prophet inveighs against those who "take a present of grain from the lowly," and in vs. 12 he calls the same persons "takers of bribes," who thrust the needy aside in the gate and refuse to hear their complaints. Indeed, according to Amos, there was no such thing as justice in Israel in his day, and any attempt to secure it always brought disappointment, and sometimes more serious consequences.

On the other hand, the prophet believed in the justice of Yahweh and, in the name of the national God, demanded that the abuses of which he complained

[1] Amos 1:6, 8.

should cease. This demand is more than once repeated. "Hate evil and love good," he pleads,[1] and again,[2] "let justice roll like water, and righteousness like a living stream." Then he threatens them with the wrath of Yahweh, assuring them that omnipotence is pledged against them, and that therefore it is folly for them to dream of escaping punishment. "Can horses run on a cliff? or can one plow the sea with oxen?" he asks, meaning that, if these things were possible, Israel might with impunity turn "justice to gall, and the fruit of righteousness to wormwood."

The phrase, "the day of Yahweh," first appears in the Book of Amos. Not that it was original with him. Indeed, it is clear from the way in which he uses it that it was not. It seems to have been a familiar expression to denote the time when, in the future, Yahweh would reveal himself to right the wrongs of his people. The Hebrews, therefore, naturally longed for it, and the more as their troubles multiplied. Amos gives it a new interpretation. His idea is that, if Israel loved good and hated evil, they would be justified in their expectations, but since they themselves have offended a righteous God, they have no right to expect from him anything but adverse judgment. "Why then," he asks, "would ye have the day of Yahweh? It is darkness, and not light; as if a man were fleeing from a lion, and a bear should meet him, and, when he came home and rested his hand against the wall, a serpent should bite him. Is not the day of Yahweh darkness rather than light, yea, gloomy without any brightness?"[3] The importance of this declaration can hardly be over-

[1] Amos 5:15. [2] Amos 5:24. [3] Amos 5:18 ff.

estimated. It swept away the flimsy error behind which those for whom it was made had taken refuge and brought them face to face with the dread alternatives of the moral law.[1]

Two or three times in this chapter it has been necessary for the sake of completeness to refer to utterances of Amos concerning foreign peoples, but no attempt has been made to define his attitude toward them. The point is one on which it is only necessary to consult his discourses. He believed, as did all the Hebrews of his day, that his people had received remarkable tokens of the divine favor. In 2:9 ff. he enumerates some of them: Yahweh had brought them out of Egypt, led them through the desert, given them the land of the Amorites, and provided them with prophets and nazirites as teachers and exemplars of righteousness. Indeed, he admits that the relation between their God and them was in some respects unique, making the former say to the latter in 3:1, "You only have I known [chosen] of all the families of the earth." He does not, however, claim or allow that Yahweh is the God of the Hebrews alone. Indeed, the choice alleged implies power over the other peoples. It is more clearly implied in 6:14, where Amos threatens Israel with subjugation by the Assyrians, who are thus made the creatures and instruments of Yahweh. Finally he distinctly teaches the universal sovereignty of his God when, in reply to the current doctrine, he says,[2] "Are ye not like the children

[1] There are two passages in chap. 9, the last in vss. 8 and 9, which are less stern in character, but they, like vss. 11–15, are additions to the original text, and therefore have no bearing in this connection.

[2] Amos 9:7.

of Cush unto me, children of Israel, saith Yahweh? If I brought Israel up from the land of Egypt, did I not also bring the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?" In the light of these passages it is not strange that Amos represents Yahweh as arraigning the surrounding peoples, as well as Israel, for inhumanity, whether toward one another or the Hebrews. He would doubtless have condemned these latter for similar treatment of foreigners, if there had been occasion for so doing. See also 3:9, already once cited, where he summons the Philistines and the Egyptians as a jury in the case of the noisy oppressors of Samaria.

CHAPTER IX

THE EPHRAIMITE SOURCE

1. THE EPHRAIMITE STORY OF THE PATRIARCHS

The Ephraimite, or Elohistic, narrative is supposed to have been written not far from the date of the prophecies of Amos, perhaps about 750 B.C. It seems to have begun with the migration of Abraham and to have followed the history of the Hebrews at least as far as the reign of David. The extracts from it cannot always be distinguished from passages on the same subjects from the earlier Judean work, but they generally betray their origin by pretty well-marked characteristics. Two of these criteria may be mentioned in this connection. In the first place, since, as the term Ephraimite implies, this narrative had its origin in the Northern Kingdom, it now and then betrays a partiality for that region, its people, its history, and its interests, as compared with Judah. Secondly, since its author (or authors) lived and wrote after Amos as well as Elijah and Elisha, he takes a didactic or apologetic tone that was foreign to the nature and purpose of the earlier writer, and when, as is sometimes the case, he cannot accept the testimony of tradition, he takes such liberties with his data as will make them better serve the purpose of edification. His work, therefore, has less value than the Judean as a mirror of more ancient times, but it contains more that is useful to one seeking knowledge of the period in which it was written. This feature can be brought clearly to view only by going through

it and noting, not only any additions it makes to the genuinely ancient material available, but the ethical variations from the older narrative. The following are the results of such a study of the extracts from it found in Genesis:

It will be remembered that, in 12:11 ff. Abraham, and in 26:6 ff. Isaac, represents his wife to be his sister, thus exposing her to danger for his own protection. In the Ephraimite narrative the story is told of Abraham only,[1] and with a significant modification. This author could not admit that the patriarch had ever been guilty of falsehood. He therefore put into his mouth the explanation, "She is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother."[2] This is a striking proof of ethical development under the influence of the early prophets. At the same time, however, it illustrates the gradual character of that development, since a marriage between half-bloods would not now be tolerated, and even among the Hebrews of later generations it was reckoned as incest.[3]

In Gen., chap. 22, the Ephraimite writer deals with a custom, human sacrifice, common among the neighboring peoples,[4] which was sometimes practiced by the Hebrews. Thus, it appears from the story of Jephthah, which is attributed to the same author, that it was tolerated in the time of the Judges,[5] and there is abundant evidence for a much later period;[6] but it was abhorrent to the humane principles of the prophets and the story here told was evidently intended to express disapproval

[1] Gen. 20:2 ff.
[2] Vs. 12.
[3] Lev. 20:1; Deut. 27:22.
[4] II Kings 3:27.
[5] Judg. 11:31, 39.
[6] Jer. 7:31, etc.

of it as well as commendation of the submissive disposition of the father of the faithful.

There are several points to be noted in the story of Jacob. In the first place, in the account of the deception practiced on Isaac to obtain his blessing,[1] according to the Elohist,[2] Jacob hesitated about entering into his mother's plan until she offered to take all the blame in case of failure.[3] Moreover, in this version he is not represented as lying outright respecting his identity, as he does repeatedly in the other.[4] The Ephraimite narrative varies from the Judean, also, in its explanation of Jacob's rise to wealth. The latter describes him as employing a device by which he controlled the color of the young of the flock under his care, and thus succeeded in getting possession of most of the increase for several years in lieu of wages.[5] The Ephraimite in his day could not indorse any such method. His explanation is found in Gen. 31:4 ff., where Jacob, in an interview with his wives, protests his loyalty to their father in spite of the latter's untrustworthiness, and declares that the cattle were taken from Laban and transferred to him by God as a reward for his faithfulness. It is clear that this author thought it beneath a man to lie and deceive his fellows. He did not, however, expect equal truthfulness from women. His opinion of them appears in the character he gives Rebekah, but more clearly in his portrayal of Rachel, whom he represents as stealing her father's teraphim[6] and outwitting him in his efforts to find it.[7]

[1] Gen., chap. 27. [2] Vss. 11 f. [3] Vss. 13.
[4] Cf. vss. 18a, 21–23 with 18b–20, 24–27.
[5] Gen. 30:37 ff. [6] Gen. 31:19. [7] Vs. 27.

The Ephraimite narrator had a rather poor opinion of women, but he did not allow himself to go too far in that direction. This appears in his version of the story of Dinah.[1] The older writer had said distinctly that Shechem had ravished the girl before he proposed to marry her, and that Simeon and Levi killed him to avenge the indignity put upon their sister.[2] According to this other no outrage was committed—God forbid!—but the sons of Jacob, being offended that Hamor had asked for their sister for his son and proposed a general intermarriage between them and his people, pretended to accept these overtures, and, when the Shechemites had been circumcised and thus, for the time being, rendered helpless, massacred them without mercy.[3]

The story of Joseph is ethically somewhat modified in the Ephraimite, as compared with the Judean, form. In the latter, for example, Judah heartlessly proposes to sell the boy, and this method of disposing of him is adopted;[4] but in the former Reuben suggests that he be thrown into a pit, intending to rescue him from his brothers, and fails in this purpose only because the Midianites have meanwhile found Joseph and taken him with them on their way to Egypt.[5] Note, also, that the later writer seems to have omitted entirely the assault upon Joseph's virtue by Potiphar's wife.[6] Finally, the same author disarms criticism of the young man's brothers in a measure by putting into his mouth the declaration that his removal to Egypt

[1] Gen., chap. 34.
[2] Vss. 2b, 7, 30 f.
[3] Vss. 2a, 4, 8 f., 25 (in part).
[4] Gen. 37:26 f.
[5] Vss. 22, 28a.
[6] Gen. 39:7 ff.

was a providential arrangement for the preservation of the family.[1]

The citations above given confirm the estimate of the Ephraimite narrative now current among biblical scholars. They show that its author regarded the materials supplied him, whether by tradition or written documents, not from the literary or historical so much as from the religious point of view, and that, living, as he did, when the influence of the prophets had begun to have its effect on the moral standards of his people, he suppressed or modified such details in his sources as did not seem to him to suit the then stage of ethical development. Thus the patriarchs took their place among the moral and religious teachers of the Hebrews.

2. THE EPHRAIMITE ACCOUNT OF THE EXODUS

In the discussion of the Judean account of the Exodus it was found necessary to rearrange some of the fragments of it that have been preserved in the Books of Exodus and Numbers. There is need of similar treatment in the case of the Ephraimite narrative, with which, indeed, the compilers took greater liberties than with its predecessor. In this, as in the other instance, it is chiefly the legislation that has been transposed. For example, there is good ground for believing that the Decalogue of Exod., chap. 20, which has generally been attributed to the Elohist, is largely of a later date, the last eight commands of the original series having been separated from the other two and inserted in the code called "The Book of the Covenant," which now immediately follows Exod. 20:21. Secondly, the story

[1] Gen. 45:6 f.

of the visit of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, and the establishment, at his suggestion, of a judicial system among the Hebrews, probably, when it was written, followed, rather than preceded,[1] the original Decalogue. Finally, it seems plausible, as good authorities now maintain, that the Book of the Covenant, in its original form, came toward the end of the account of the Exodus, whence it was removed, after the union of the two earlier documents, to make room for the Book of Deuteronomy. There are various reasons for these critical dicta, one of which, that the narrative, when read in accordance with them, becomes more intelligible than it is in its present arrangement, will justify their application in the present instance.

The Ephraimite narrative, outside the legislative portions, contains little bearing on the subject under investigation. There are, however, a few points that require attention. Here, as in the Judean account, of course, Moses is the principal figure, but he is not the impulsive and almost violent character of that source. In fact, he is represented as a pattern of meekness and moderation, and various incidents are narrated in which he appears in this character. Thus, he questions his own worthiness to act as the messenger of Yahweh to Pharaoh;[2] his only response to the murmurs of the people is an appeal to Yahweh;[3] at the suggestion of Jethro he transfers his judicial authority in large measure to others;[4] and, finally, he requests, rather than demands, of the Edomites and the Amorites a passage through

[1] Exod., chap. 18. [2] Exod. 3:11.

[3] Exod. 15:24 f.; 17:3 f.; 11:1 f.; 12:1, 13.

[4] Exod. 18:25 f.

their countries for Israel.[1] It is only on the occasion of the discovery of the golden calf that he gives place to anger, which, however, is speedily replaced by the most unselfish anxiety for the offenders.[2]

The Ephraimite author reveals his peculiar views on the subject of lying in this, as he did in the preceding period; for while he puts into the mouth of Moses a straightforward demand upon Pharaoh for the release of his people from bondage,[3] he makes no attempt to mend the story of the midwives, who resorted to falsehood to save themselves from punishment for omitting to destroy the male children of the Hebrews at birth.[4] His opinion of women appears also in 3:21 f., where the Hebrew women, on the eve of the Exodus, are directed to take advantage of the terror produced by the plague to spoil the Egyptians.[5]

The passage just cited is interesting, not only because it betrays a derogatory opinion of women, but because here, as in the case of the transfer of Laban's wealth to Jacob, the author seems to have thought of God as above the ethical requirements to which human beings are amenable. These passages, however, are not so troublesome to the cursory reader as those from the same hand in which God is represented as hardening Pharaoh's heart, lest the king should too readily submit to the demand of Moses for the liberation of his

[1] Num. 20:14 ff.; 21:21 f. [2] Exod. 32:19 f., 30 ff.

[3] Exod. 5:1; cf. vs. 3 (J). In the present text this passage reads, "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the desert," but it is clear from 3:10 that the final clause is a harmonistic addition. See also 3:21 f.

[4] Exod. 1:15 ff. [5] See also 12:35.

people.[1] Now, it is needless to deny that all of these passages fall short of a worthy representation of the Deity, but they appear less objectionable when one considers that the fundamental thought in each of them is really the divine justice, and that this idea cannot, even now, be said to have been developed "unto perfection."

The mountain toward which the Hebrews directed their march on leaving Egypt is called by the Ephraimite narrator "Horeb." Here Yahweh revealed himself amid thunderings and lightnings to the assembled people, and gave them a decalogue corresponding to the one found in Exod., chap. 34. This decalogue, as already intimated, is now preserved, partly in the Decalogue of Exod., chap. 20, and partly in the Book of the Covenant (Exod., chaps. 21–23). How closely it resembled the Judean will appear if these are set over against one another, on the one hand, from J. Exod. 34:14, 17, 19, 21, 22a, 22b, 25a, 25b, 26a, and 26b, and on the other from E. Exod. 20:3, 4, 24; 22:29a, 29b–30; 23:10 f., 12, 15, 16a, and 16b.

The first thing that strikes one on comparing these two decalogues is their remarkable similarity, no fewer than seven of the commands being common to both of them. Next, one notes that the three peculiar to the later list are easily explained as the product of a natural development, III being a legalization of the local sanctuaries of the Northern Kingdom, VI an extension of VII, and VIII a recognition of the coalescence of the passover with the feast of unleavened bread. Finally, it

[1] Exod. 10:20, 27.

occurs to one that in this second, as in the first decalogue, the commands are all of a religious character, and have ethical significance only as the basis of a covenant between Yahweh and his people. See Exod. 24:3 ff., which originally applied to the Decalogue, but has been revised and made to refer to the Book of the Covenant, which now immediately precedes.

The Ephraimite narrator, however, does not stop here. He proceeds, in his account of the visit of Jethro, which is now wrongly, as chap. 18, inserted before the Decalogue as well as the Book of the Covenant, to depict Moses as a judge,[1] sitting "from morning until evening" to make known to those who had suits to plead "the judgments of God," and finally, by the urgent advice of his father-in-law, appointing subordinates of various grades to relieve him of the decision of all but the "hard causes." Note, however, that although Moses is here at once prophet and judge, the two spheres of his activity are kept distinct, showing that, even after Amos, the Hebrews were slow to perceive how intimate is the relation between morals and religion.

A judicial system as elaborate as that said to have been established by Moses would naturally, in time, produce a body of decisions and precedents like the so-called Book of the Covenant. The Ephraimite author, however, does not look for the origin of the code in any such process. He derives it directly from God. He doubtless taught, in his narrative as originally written, that it was given to Moses in Moab and by him communicated to the children of Israel just before he died

[1] Vss. 14 ff.

and they invaded Canaan. It consists of Exod. 21:1—23:19, except the passages already cited as parts of the Elohistic Decalogue and certain others of a Deuteronomic character inserted by later writers. Purged of these foreign elements, it consists, according to Baentsch, of Exod. 21:1–36; 22:1–21a, 23–25a, 26–28; 23:1–3, 6–8.

This collection is not a haphazard one, but orderly enough to be called a proper code. First, there is a series of laws (21:1–16, 18–32) dealing with injuries to the person. It is followed by another (21:33—22:17) on damages to rights in property; then by seven items (22:18–21a, 25a, 26, 28) forming a group of a somewhat miscellaneous[1] character; and finally by another group (~~22:21a, 23, 25, 26 f.;~~ 23:1–3, 6–8) prohibiting various abuses in the administration of justice. These two groups betray the influence of the prophets, and were therefore probably added when the code was incorporated into the Ephraimite narrative.

The body of the code is older—how much older it is difficult to determine. In discussing this question it has been customary to call attention to some of the "statutes," as the Hebrews called the component enactments, which presuppose a settled agricultural life; for example, Exod. 22:5 f., where the background consists of fields and vineyards. It was assumed that such regulations would not be made until they were needed, and it was argued that they could not be older, and probably were considerably later, than the date of

[1] Two of the verses in Baentsch's list (22:23, 27) are omitted as accretions to the laws in vss. 21a and 26. Perhaps 21:17 should be inserted before 22:18.

the arrival of the tribes in Canaan. This argument assumed also that the code, whatever its age, originated among the Hebrews. Such an assumption, however, can now no longer go unchallenged; for the discovery of the Code of Hammurabi has shown that similar laws were in force in Babylonia centuries before Moses, and, since Canaan was then and for generations afterward a part of the Babylonian empire, doubtless in that country also. This being the case it will be worth while to compare Exod. 21:2 with Ham. 117; Exod. 21:7–11 with Ham. 119; Exod. 21:15 with Ham. 195; Exod. 21:16 with Ham. 14; Exod. 21:18 f. with Ham. 206; Exod. 21:22 with Ham. 209; Exod. 21:23–25 with Ham. 210; Exod. 21:28 with Ham. 250; Exod. 21:29 f. with Ham. 251; Exod. 21:32 with Ham. 252; Exod. 22:1, 3b, 4 with Ham. 8; Exod. 22:2–3a with Ham. 21; Exod. 22:5 with Ham. 57; Exod. 22:6 with Ham. 55; Exod. 22:7 f. with Ham. 125; Exod. 22:9 with Ham. 9–11; Exod. 22:10 f. with Ham. 266; Exod. 22:12 f. with Ham. 267; Exod. 22:14–15a with Ham. 244; Exod. 22:18 with Ham. 2; and Exod. 23:1 with Ham. 3 f.

The result of the comparison of these codes is instructive, in the first place, on account of the number of cases of more or less striking correspondence. The main body of the Ephraimite code (Exod. 21:2–16, 18–36; 22:1–16) consists of twenty-seven more or less distinct enactments. Of these there are no fewer than nineteen for which there are corresponding statutes in the Code of Hammurabi.

The degree of resemblance between the two codes, too, is remarkable. The Hebrew laws are generally

cast in the hypothetical form, with *when* or *if* as an introductory particle; but there are a few (21:12, 15–17) that are introduced by the subject of the action described; and this is precisely the case in the Babylonian code, where there are only four of the two hundred and eighty-two paragraphs that do not begin with the hypothetical particle. More remarkable than this is another coincidence. In Exod. 22:7 f. it is provided that, when property left by one person in the keeping of another is reported to have been stolen, the guardian of the property shall "come near to God to see whether he have not put his hand to his neighbor's goods"; and the same provision is made, vs. 9, in the case of property lost, when discovered in the hands of another party. The expression used is peculiar, yet it is the one found in similar connections in the Code of Hammurabi.[1]

Other points of resemblance might be mentioned, but these seem sufficient to indicate that the two codes are related. The relation between them is perhaps best explained by supposing that the Code of Hammurabi, soon after its promulgation, became the law of Canaan as well as of Babylonia, that the substance of it remained as a part of the common law after the conquest of the country by the Hebrews, and that when, after the kingdom of David was divided, someone undertook to provide the northern tribes with a code of their own, it was naturally based on the common law, and thus, in a sense, on its Babylonian predecessor. When the Ephraimite author incorporated this code

[1] §§ 9, 126. In this case the correspondence is not exact, but § 126 is closely related to § 125, the one cited. For other cases in which the Babylonian code requires appearance before God, see §§ 103, 106, 107, 120, 281.

into his narrative he put into concrete and practical form the doctrine of the prophets, of whom he was one, that domestic and social obligations are, as really as if they were audible to the outer ear, commands of God.

It is plain that the Ephraimite code, through its relation to that of Hammurabi, has acquired a new importance. It will therefore be worth while to analyze it and determine how great progress it registers.

This code has little that bears on the subject of personal ethics. In fact, the only passage that needs to be cited in this connection is Exod. 22:19, where it is ordained that "whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death."

There is more touching the family. The father is an absolute master. He can sell his wife[1] or his daughter[2] into bondage, and, if anyone violates the latter, he can force the offender to marry her or pay him adequate damages.[3] The practice of polygamy is recognized, but there are restrictions to be observed. A husband may not sell a Hebrew concubine except for redemption; nor may he neglect her when, for any reason, he adds a second wife to his household.[4] If he does, she becomes entitled to her freedom.[5] Children are not permitted to treat their parents with irreverence. He that either strikes[6] or curses[7] his father or his mother is to be put to death. The treatment of slaves is carefully regulated. In the first place, it is forbidden, on pain of death, to kidnap men and sell them into slavery,[8] but a thief may be reduced to servitude, if he

[1] Exod. 21:3.
[2] Exod. 21:7.
[3] Exod. 22:16.
[4] Exod. 21:10.
[5] Exod. 21:11.
[6] Exod. 21:15.
[7] Exod. 21:17.
[8] Exod. 21:16.

cannot pay his fine.[1] If a man sells himself, he may be held in bondage only six years,[2] unless for love of a wife, also a slave, and their children, he chooses to remain with his master.[3] A female slave whom her master has given to his son must be treated "after the manner of daughters."[4] The master may not treat his slaves with cruelty. If he kills one of them outright he must be punished as for killing any other person,[5] and, if he seriously maims one of them, he must set the sufferer free.[6] If a slave is injured by an ugly ox, his master is entitled to damages to the amount of thirty shekels of silver.[7] The last three enactments, which seem to apply to foreign as well as Hebrew slaves, must have been very influential in protecting them from injury.

In the field of social ethics the right to life takes precedence of all others. It is the first to receive protection in this code. The penalty for the violation of it is death. In earlier times, when the *lex talionis* was in unrestricted operation, no one stopped to ask whether the slayer did the deed by accident or with malice prepense. Joab took the life of Abner, although he knew that his rival had killed his brother in self-defense.[8] In this code the difference between voluntary and involuntary homicide is clearly recognized; the general law being followed by the proviso that there shall be a refuge, namely, the nearest sanctuary, where the slayer may find safety until it is shown that he is guilty of murder. If he is, he may be taken from the very altar and executed.[9] There is one exception, if it is an

[1] Exod. 22:3.
[2] Exod. 21:2–4.
[3] Exod. 21:5 f.
[4] Exod. 21:9.
[5] Exod. 21:20 f.
[6] Exod. 21:26 f.
[7] Exod. 21:32.
[8] II Sam. 2:18 ff.
[9] Exod. 21:12–14.

exception, to the rule that homicide is murder only when premeditated. It is the case in which a woman dies as the result of a miscarriage caused by injuries received from one of two or more men in a quarrel. Then the penalty is life for life;[1] but one must conclude from the corresponding paragraph, 210, in the Code of Hammurabi, that it is not the life of the man who did the injury that is required, but that of his wife or daughter; the idea apparently being that the sacrifice of a woman was in the nature of a fine imposed upon her father or husband, as her owner, like the damages for loss of time and the doctor's bill in vss. 18 f.

These last verses deal with the first of a series of injuries to the person. If a man in a brawl with another hurts, but not mortally, his opponent, he must pay the costs. If, on the other hand, a man injures his servant, and the latter does not die "under his hand," that is, immediately, the master is not punished, except in the loss of his property.[2] In the case of the pregnant woman, if she suffers short of death, any harm that accrues to her must be inflicted upon the unfortunate woman who has to atone for her husband's or father's clumsy rage, "eye for eye."[3]

The Ephraimite Code protects not only the person but the property of its ward: first against criminal carelessness. Thus, if a man leaves a pit open, he must pay for any animal that may be injured by falling into

[1] Exod. 21:23. [2] Exod. 21:20 f.

[3] Exod. 21:24 f. Baentsch attaches vss. 23–25 to vs. 19, thus making them refer to the first case of a quarrel. This, however, can hardly be correct, since vs. 22 requires such an alternative and vs. 19 does not need one, being itself the alternative to vs. 18.

it.[1] If he knowingly keeps an ox that gores, he must be prepared to pay for slaves, as above noted, or cattle that it may have killed.[2] If he lets his cattle roam into a neighbor's field, he must indemnify the owner of that field "from the best of his own field."[3] If he allows a fire that he has kindled for any purpose to spread and destroy a neighbor's crops, he must "make restitution."[4] If he allows an animal entrusted to him to be stolen, he must make it good.[5]

The thief is more severely punished, since he, for an ox, must make a fivefold, and for a sheep a fourfold, recompense; unless the stolen animal is found alive in his possession, in which case the fine is only twofold for either of the animals mentioned or an ass.[6] If the thief be caught in the act by night, the owner of the property jeopardized may even kill him with impunity, but, if by day, his person must be respected.[7] If a man has anything in his possession that another claims as stolen property, the case must come before God; the one who wins it receiving from the other twofold the value of the thing claimed.[8] This law would naturally operate to prevent slanderous charges as well as theft or the traffic in stolen goods.

There are carefully framed laws respecting property committed to the keeping of one person by another. If its guardian reports it stolen, but cannot name the thief, the case must be brought before God, to see whether he has not himself appropriated "his neighbor's goods."[9] So, also, when the property is an

[1] Exod. 21:33 f.
[2] Exod. 21:32, 35 f.
[3] Exod. 22:5.
[4] Exod. 22:6.
[5] Exod. 22:12.
[6] Exod. 22:1, 4.
[7] Exod. 22:2 f.
[8] Exod. 22:9.
[9] Exod. 22:7 f.

animal which dies, or is hurt or stolen, without anyone's knowledge.[1] If he reports it torn by wild beasts, he must bring the remains of it as proof, or make restitution.[2] When a man borrows an animal from another, and it dies or is hurt while he is using it, he must replace it, unless the owner was with it or received hire for the use of it.[3]

There remain the two small groups of laws with which the code ends. Most of them may be regarded as specifications under the general requirement of truth and loyalty. Thus, in Exod. 22:20 the Israelite is forbidden to sacrifice to "any God save Yahweh only," and in vs. 28 to "revile God" or "curse the ruler" his representative. In this connection should also, perhaps, be cited 22:18, "Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live." The acts prohibited are forms of disloyalty to Yahweh. The rest of these laws deal with the various ways by which justice is perverted. They prohibit slander,[4] perjury,[5] conspiracy,[6] partiality,[7] lawlessness,[8] and bribery.[9]

A code of laws published about the middle of the eighth century before the Christian era would have been incomplete without a section on the treatment of the unfortunate. It is not surprising, therefore, to find

[1] Exod. 22:10 f. [2] Exod. 22:13.

[3] Exod. 22:14. There is another rendering for vs. 15b, namely, "If he (the one responsible for the death or injury of the animal) is a hireling, it (the price of the animal) comes out of his wages." So Baentsch.

[4] Exod. 23:1. [5] *Ibid.* [6] Exod. 23:2.

[7] Exod. 23:3, 6. In vs. 3, for "a poor man" read "a great man," thus producing an antithesis with vs. 6.

[8] Exod. 23:7. [9] Exod. 23:8.

that this one protects the poor debtor, forbidding anyone who loans him money to act the usurer toward him[1] or keep the garment taken in pledge over night.[2] Here belongs, also, the law prohibiting the oppression of the stranger in Israel.[3]

Such is the Ephraimite code, in the form in which it was incorporated into the narrative of which it once formed a part. It was a very simple instrument, hardly adequate to the wants of the most primitive community. Still, it furnished a standard of conduct, and as such doubtless was useful in a pedagogic way. Meanwhile the prophets taught, and so diligently, that, at the end of a century, this code had to be rewritten to represent the best ethical sentiment of the Judah of that day.

3. THE EPHRAIMITE NARRATIVE IN JOSHUA, JUDGES, AND SAMUEL

In the preceding books the Ephraimite narrative has followed pretty closely the outline of the Judean. The same is the case in the Book of Joshua, where, moreover, the extracts from the two works are sometimes so skilfully wrought together that there are scholars who do not attempt to separate them. In Judges and Samuel they are more independent and more easily distinguishable. One difference between them is found in the characters that they portray, most of those in the Ephraimite narrative being ethically more developed, but less real and interesting than their

[1] Exod. 22:25a. The latter half of this verse, forbidding discount, that is, a percentage deducted beforehand from the face of the loan, is an addition to the original text.

[2] Exod. 22:26. [3] Exod. 22:21a.

Judean counterparts. Joshua is most changed. In the older references to him he is a lusty warrior, perfectly human, who is always at the front in battle.[1] In the Ephraimite narrative he is less natural and heroic. Thus, in his first battle, as described in Exod. 17:8 ff., it is not he who holds the attention of the reader or really defeats the Amalekites, but Moses sitting, with hand and staff upraised, on a neighboring hilltop. The Judean author represents him as taking Jericho by storm,[2] but according to the other, "the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him."[3] The battle at Ai, according to the same authority, was but a repetition of the one at Rephidim, except that Joshua, with his javelin, takes the place of his former master;[4] while at Beth-horon Yahweh killed more with his hailstones than the children of Israel slew with the sword.[5] In the battle of the Kishon, another Rephidim, Barak gets his courage from a woman, and Sisera is an easy victim for Jael's mallet.[6] Gideon, too, is less robust and masterful in the later than in the earlier version of his exploits. Compare the mildness of his bearing toward the Ephraimites in Judg. 8:1–3 (E) with the sternness of his treatment of the people of Succoth and Penuel in vss. 4 ff. (J). The case of Abimelech, also, is interesting. The Judean account of him[7] leaves him master of the field. He resides at Arumah; Gaal and his clan are banished

[1] Josh. 6:10; 8:5.

[2] Josh. 6:20, the first and the last clause.

[3] Josh. 6:20, except the first and the last clause.

[4] Josh. 8:18, 26.

[5] Josh. 10:11.

[6] Judg. 4:8, 19 ff.

[7] Judg. 9:26–41.

from Shechem. There is no attempt to point a moral. The Ephraimite version,[1] on the other hand, is a lesson on the wickedness of fratricide and ingratitude, and the inevitableness of fitting retribution. The intent of the author is so evident that it was hardly necessary for him, or someone like-minded, to add the reflection, "Thus God requited the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did to his father in slaying his seventy brethren. All the wickedness of the men of Shechem, also, did God requite upon their heads, in that upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal."[2] It is Saul, however, who suffers most at the hands of this author. In the first place, the young king is dwarfed by Samuel, in the Judean narrative a local seer, but here a majestic prophet who publicly reproves him for not obeying instructions and finally announces his rejection by Yahweh.[3] When David appears he at once eclipses the unfortunate monarch, who is finally obliged to efface himself and defraud his son to the extent of acknowledging the victor over the Philistine giant as his legitimate successor.[4] There are those who would find in Jephthah an exception to the rule above stated. It is hardly possible, however, to believe that Judg. 12:1–6 is by the same hand as 11:34–40. This being admitted, the former must be attributed to the Judean, the latter to the Ephraimite, author. In other words, here again the later writer betrays his date and bias by transforming the rough-and-ready soldier of earlier tradition, who carries all before him, into a pitiable victim of his own rashness, and incidentally an example

[1] Vss. 1–25, 42–55.
[2] Vss. 56 f.
[3] I Sam. 15: 17 ff.
[4] I Sam. 17:1 ff; 23:17; 26:25.

of the unnatural cruelty of human sacrifices.[1] The partiality of this author for David has already been noted. But his David, partly, perhaps, because his account has not been so fully preserved, does not make the impression upon the reader that is made by the Judean's.

In the preceding paragraph attention was directed especially to the personal characters of individuals cited. The comparisons there made showed that the Ephraimite author, in his accounts of them, was more sensitive than his predecessor to ethical considerations. The result is similar when one studies his references to social conditions in the same period. In the first place, although he recites without apparent disapproval the treachery of Jael,[2] as well as how Rabah deceived the messengers of her king[3] and Michal lied to protect David,[4] he represents Joshua as reproving the Gibeonites for deceiving him,[5] and probably intended that Saul's failure to give his daughter Merab to David according to promise[6] should be reckoned to his discredit. The last two cases support the supposition above broached, that, according to the Ephraimite author, it was beneath a man to lie. There is one instance that seems unreconcilable with such a conclusion, namely, that of David and the method by which he obtained food and a weapon when he was fleeing from Saul.[7] It is probable, however, that this is a case in which the author borrowed from an earlier source and neglected to adapt the story as he received it to his own conception of the character of David.

[1] Gen. 22:1 ff. is from the same (E) source.

[2] Judg. 4:18 ff. [3] Josh. 2:5b. [4] I Sam. 19:14 ff. [5] Josh. 9:22a. [6] I Sam. 18:17 ff. [7] I Sam. 21:1 ff.

A growing regard for truth is certainly indicated by the prominence given to the covenant between David and Jonathan, and the loyalty of the young men to each other.[1] The faithfulness of Jonathan appears in the plea by which, for the time being, he quenched the jealous anger of his father,[2] and the willingness with which, at their last meeting, he renounced his claim to the succession in favor of David.[3]

The plea of Jonathan is further notable as an appeal to Saul's gratitude. He begs his father not to sin against his friend, for one reason, "because," as he says, "his works have been to thee-ward very good: for he took his life in his hand, and smote the Philistine, and Yahweh wrought a great victory for all Israel." This passage recalls an earlier one from the Ephraimite narrative in Judg. 9:16 ff., where Jotham, in his protest against the choice of Abimelech for their king by the Shechemites, says, "Now, therefore, if ye have dealt truly and uprightly, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done to him according to the deserving of his hands (for my father fought for you, and adventured his life, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian; and ye have risen up against my father's house this day, and slain his sons, three score and ten persons, on one stone, and made Abimelech, the son of his maid-servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he was your brother)," etc. The milder note here harmonizes with the recognized date of the Ephraimite narrative.

[1] I Sam. 18:3.

[2] I Sam. 19:4 ff.

[3] I Sam. 23:15 ff.

There was almost constant hostility, according to the Ephraimite narrative, between the Hebrews and their neighbors before the establishment of the monarchy under David. The foreigners are generally represented as being the aggressors. In such cases the author does not feel called to explain or defend the wars that were waged. When, however, he comes to the war with Amalek, in which, according to I Sam. 15:4 ff., the Hebrews not only invaded the country of the enemy, but "utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword," he cannot let this barbarous proceeding go unexplained. In the first place, he says that it was commanded by Yahweh through Samuel, whom, secondly, he represents as justifying his own severity by recalling the hostility of the Amalekites to his people on their march from Egypt.[1] In other words, he teaches that God is not an arbitrary ruler, but himself conforms to the principles by which he requires that his creatures shall be governed.

[1] I Sam. 15:2 f.; Exod. 17:8 ff.

CHAPTER X

HOSEA AND HIS TIMES

The prophet Hosea made his appearance in Israel a few years after Amos, or not far from 750 B.C. At that time Jeroboam II was still alive, but he died about 745 B.C., and six months later his son and successor, Zechariah, was assassinated and the dynasty of Jehu came to an end. It was a certain Shallum the son of Jabesh who overthrew it, but he did not long enjoy the honor he had usurped; for it was only a month before "Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah," the first capital of the Northern Kingdom,[1] "and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh, and slew him, and reigned in his stead."[2] He succeeded in maintaining himself on the throne for ten years, with the aid of Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria, to whom, however, in 738 B.C. he was obliged to pay "a thousand talents of silver that his hand might be with him confirming the kingdom in his hand." He raised the money by a levy on the wealthy men of his kingdom, each of whom was assessed fifty shekels for that purpose.[3] This was not a large sum—only about $33.21—but the fact that there were six thousand men who could be called wealthy shows that the country had not suffered seriously during the revolution; in other words, that conditions were much the same as they were when Amos startled the grandees of Samaria

[1] I Kings 14:17.

[2] II Kings 15:14.

[3] II Kings 15:19 f.

from their luxurious dreams with threats of an Assyrian invasion.[1]

Conditions were much the same, but the two prophets did not view them from the same standpoint, and therefore did not deal with them in the same manner. Amos, with his keen intellectuality, set himself to unmask the errors and fallacies of his time, and picture the logical and inevitable result of persistence in harboring them. Hosea, being predominantly emotional, found the source of all the evils that he lamented in the heart, and sought to cure them by appeals to the affections. The fundamental thought in his prophecies has already several times made its appearance. It is the idea of a covenant between Yahweh and his people. This prophet believed, with Amos and others who had preceded him, that such a covenant had been made and broken, but he gave to the unfaithfulness of Israel more prominence than his predecessors, and clothed it in imagery as striking as it was novel. He calls it harlotry, and finds it symbolized by the unfaithfulness of his own wife.

The figure appears in the first chapter of his book, where he says that at the beginning of his ministry he received from Yahweh the command, "Go, take to thee a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom; for the land committeth whoredom from Yahweh;"[2] and that, in obedience to this command, he married Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, who bore him three children. This passage has had so many and such mistaken interpretations that it deserves special attention. There are those who claim that the prophet

[1] Amos 5:27; 6:14; 7:16 f. [2] Hos. 1:2.

must here be relating a dream, since God would not command the act described, or Hosea obey if it were commanded. So Aben Ezra. This explanation does credit to the ethical judgment of those who adopt it, but it is exegetically indefensible. A similar interpretation is that which represents the prophet as describing a subjective rather than an objective experience. So Marck. The objection to this is that throughout the book harlotry is treated as a concrete symbol, which it must be to be effective. Those who interpret the statement cited objectively differ on some points. Thus, of those who agree that Gomer was a harlot when Hosea married her, some suppose that she then became a virtuous woman (Rohling), while others insist that she "must have manifoldly sinned," even after marriage, since otherwise she could not "so shadow forth the manifold defilement of the human race." So Pusey. The former of these views is forbidden by the fact that the woman of 3:2, who is described as "an adultress," is none other than Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and must be to give that passage any meaning. The latter destroys the fitness of the symbol as here used, to say nothing of impeaching the sanity of the prophet or the character of God. The only interpretation that avoids all the above objections is that of Wellhausen, according to which Gomer was not actually a harlot when Hosea married her, but afterward became unfaithful, and that, when the prophet came to reflect on his experience and perceive its typical value, he believed it to have been divinely ordained, and therefore, as any other prophet would have done, represents the impulse on which he had acted as a

command of God. The teaching of Hosea, then, on this point is that, as Gomer, after she had become his by the law and custom of his country, violated the covenant between them, so Israel, after Yahweh, with their consent, had taken them for his people, and provided them with a goodly land to dwell in, had wantonly abandoned him for the worship and service of other gods.[1]

At this point there is need of further explanation. The first impression made by the references of Hosea to the unfaithfulness of Israel is that Baal was as openly and generally worshiped in the reign of Jeroboam II as in that of Ahab. This, however, as is clear from the prophecies of Amos, was not the case. In fact, the people whom Hosea arraigns claimed, and Amos did not dispute it, that they were worshipers of Yahweh. This was the actual situation: When the Hebrews took possession of Palestine, or a part of it, they regarded themselves as the people of Yahweh; but they knew that the Canaanites worshiped Baal, and, not having as yet grasped the doctrine taught by Amos, that their God was the universal Lord, they were naturally led to combine the worship of Baal with that of Yahweh, thinking thus to insure a blessing upon the corn, wine, and oil that they were cultivating.[2] Later, when they came to believe in only one God, they seem to have identified Yahweh with Baal and sometimes to have called him by the same name.[3] At any rate, they incorporated into their worship idolatrous features—when Jeroboam I set up the bulls at Bethel and Dan

[1] Hos. 4:12; 5:4; 6:10; 9:1.

[2] Hos. 2:8. [3] Hos. 2:16.

he proclaimed them the God that brought Israel up out of Egypt[1]—and, because these features had been retained, Hosea insisted that their worship was not a worship of Yahweh, but of Baal, and a constant violation of their covenant with the God of their fathers.[2] Thus Hosea followed the earlier prophets in finding an ethical basis for the Hebrew religion in a covenant between Yahweh and his people, but he put the thought into a new form which his successors, especially Jeremiah and Ezekiel, further developed.[3]

The prophet Hosea had something to say on various other ethical topics of a special character. He condemned as severely as Amos the obscene and drunken orgies that accompanied the corrupt worship of the time.[4] His teaching with reference to the family is especially interesting. Not that he lays down any rules on the proper conduct of its members one toward another. He does nothing of the kind, but he tells the experience of a husband and father of the highest type, himself, and thus most powerfully impresses the serious reader. He probably procured his wife in the usual way, by virtual purchase, but he must have loved her very fondly from the first. Yet, when he discovered that she was untrue to him, her conduct and character seem to have been so revolting to him that he banished her from his home. Finally, however, his affection for her reasserted itself, and, although he had no proof that she was even penitent, in defiance of custom and public opinion[5] he redeemed her from one of her lovers

[1] I Kings 12:26 ff.

[2] Hos. 2:13.

[3] Jer. 3:1 ff.; Ezek. 16:1 ff.

[4] Hos. 4:10, 13 f.

[5] Hos. 3:1.

and again took her under his protection.[1] In so doing he set an example of conjugal charity in which he himself could not but see the divine compassion mirrored.[2]

The prophecies of Hosea also reveal the ideal father. There is nothing to indicate what he did with the children that Gomer had borne when he learned that they were the offspring of adultery. His first impulse would be to send them to their mother, but they seem to have found a place in his heart from which, when the time came, he could not eject them. "How then," he said, "can Yahweh give up Ephraim, and cast off Israel?"[3] Thus his own heart taught him to hope that Yahweh, having found a way to save his people, would "heal their backslidings" and once more "love them freely."[4]

The unfaithfulness of Gomer was nothing rare or strange in Israel. The prophet says that adultery was as common as swearing, and both were universal;[5] and naturally, since prostitution was a religious institution and women were taught that there was no way in which they could better please the gods for whom they had forsaken Yahweh than by the sacrifice of their virtue. It was these conditions that gave Hosea a double warrant for calling the popular religion harlotry.[6]

A prophet who laid so much stress upon faithfulness to Yahweh would naturally require men to stand by their engagements with one another. It is not strange, therefore, to find him complaining that there is no faithfulness in the land, but that the inhabitants

[1] Hos. 3:1 f. [3] Hos. 11:8 f. [5] Hos. 4:2; 7:4.
[2] Hos. 2:19. [4] Hos. 14:4. [6] Hos. 4:11 ff.

generally give their oaths only to break them.[1] He accuses his people, too, of fraud and deception. Like their wily ancestor, Jacob, they practice dishonesty in business and boast of the success of their devices.[2] Naturally, they are as deceitful and treacherous in public as in private affairs. Hence the frequent and sudden changes in their rulers.[3] Nor is this all. Not content with cheating one another in trade, they actually steal from one another, sneaking into private houses or more boldly attacking one another on the street or the highway.[4] Their leaders are their teachers in these outrages, their princes being "like them that remove the landmark";[5] and their priests not scrupling to murder whom they would plunder.[6] Hosea condemns this or any other kind of violence. In this respect he differs from some of his predecessors. The difference appears in 1:4. This verse contains a reference to the revolution wrought by Jehu. That movement, it will be remembered, was ordered by Yahweh,[7] foretold, with all its horrors, by Elijah,[8] and initiated when Jehu was anointed by a disciple of Elisha.[9] It also, as has been shown, had the approval of Jehonadab the son of

[1] Hos. 4:1.

[2] Hos. 12:4, 8 f.

[3] Hos. 7:3 ff. In vs. 3 the original reading, according to Wellhausen, was, "They anoint a king in their wickedness, and princes by their deceptions."

[4] Hos. 4:2; 7:1.

[5] Hos. 5:10. Here and in vss. 12, 13, and 14 for "Judah" read "Israel," and in vs. 11 "Ephraim oppresseth and crusheth justice." See the Greek Version.

[6] Hos. 6:9.

[7] I Kings 19:16.

[8] I Kings 21:21 ff.

[9] II Kings 9:1 ff.

Rechab and his zealots.[1] Hosea, however, evidently regarded it as contrary to the divine will, in fact a crime, making Yahweh say that he will "avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu."[2] There could not be a better example of ethical development.

Thus far the teaching of Hosea has been mostly negative. He does not, however, always deal in prohibitions. There are two passages in which he makes positive demands. In Hos. 6:6 he represents Yahweh as saying, "I desire goodness, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." The word here rendered "goodness" by the American Revisers should be translated "kindness," as in the margin, since it is intended to denote, not personal excellence, but a benevolent and beneficent demeanor. This appears more clearly in the second of the passages mentioned, 10:12, where the prophet exhorts his people, "Sow to yourselves righteousness and reap kindness." The parallel word, here rendered "righteousness," is one that is constantly used of benevolent activity, especially on the part of the Deity. See Ps. 36:10 and 103:17, where both words evidently have the same sense, but especially Ps. 24:6, where righteousness is a synonym of "blessing" and "salvation."[3] The gist of the passage, therefore, is that the fundamental requirement of social ethics is a good-will that reveals itself in a corresponding activity for the common well-being.

[1] II Kings 10:15 ff. [2] Hos. 1:4.

[3] In modern Hebrew the word for "righteousness" is used in the plural to denote alms.

CHAPTER XI

ISAIAH AND MICAH, AND THEIR TIMES

1. ISAIAH

It was in the year of Uzziah's death, probably 735 B.C., that Isaiah received his call to the office of prophet.[1] Jotham had then for about fifteen years been regent of Judah, his father, who was a leper, being incapacitated for public affairs.[2] He reigned only a year in his own right, then, in 734 B.C., he was followed by his son Ahaz. The latter is said to have reigned only sixteen years,[3] but since, according to II Kings 18:13, Hezekiah cannot have come to the throne before 714 B.C., he must have ruled until that time, or about twenty-one years. The reign of Hezekiah lasted twenty-nine years, or until 688 B.C., when he was succeeded by Manasseh, under whom, says tradition, Isaiah suffered martyrdom.

These were eventful years for both of the Hebrew kingdoms. That of Israel had for some time been paying tribute to Assyria, but in 735 there was a revolution in which Pekah, an officer in the army, overthrew Pekahiah the son of Menahem and took possession of the vacant throne. This Pekah was a Gileadite, and probably represented a patriotic party opposed to the policy of submission to Assyria. At any rate, Pekah at once refused to pay tribute, and entered into an alliance with Resin of Syria and other neighboring rulers for the purpose of maintaining their independence.

[1] Isa. 6:1 ff. [2] II Kings 15:5. [3] II Kings 16:1.

Ahaz seems to have refused to join the coalition. Pekah and Resin, therefore, undertook to force him into it. Thereupon he appealed to Tiglath-pileser, who, before the end of 734 B.C., invaded Palestine and, after wasting parts of the kingdom of Israel, drove Hanno the king of Gaza into exile in Egypt. At the end of three years he had conquered Syria and compelled all the rest of the rebellious states to acknowledge his sovereignty.[1]

When, in 727 B.C., Tiglath-pileser died, there was another revolt in the West, but when Shalmaneser IV, his successor, appeared on the scene, Hoshea, the then king of Israel, promptly submitted.[2] The next year, however, he rebelled again, and this time, relying on the help of Egypt, he persisted until he was defeated and captured,[3] and his capital, Samaria, invested by an Assyrian army. Then suddenly Shalmaneser IV died; but Sargon II took his place and pressed the siege so successfully that in 722 B.C. he took the city and carried into captivity thousands of its inhabitants.[4] This seemed to be the end of the Northern Kingdom, but in 720 B.C. the survivors joined a league headed by the king of Hamath, and Sargon had to make another expedition to the shore of the Mediterranean, where he first subdued the northern peoples, and then, moving southward, met the Philistines and the Egyptians at Raphia and so thoroughly defeated them that they made no further resistance.

There is nothing to show that Judah took any part in these uprisings. Indeed, so long as Ahaz lived he and his people seem faithfully to have kept the pledges

[1] II Kings 16:9.
[2] II Kings 17:3.
[3] II Kings 17:4.
[4] II Kings 17:5 f.

made at the beginning of his reign to obtain Assyrian assistance. When, however, in 714 B.C., Hezekiah came to the throne, he adopted a different policy. In 711 he took part in a movement started by the king of Ashdod, and it was only by promptly withdrawing from the coalition that he escaped the punishment which Sargon II inflicted upon his confederates.

The revolt of 711 B.C. ought to have taught Hezekiah wisdom, but it did not prevent him from taking advantage of the confusion into which the death of Sargon in 705 threw the Assyrian empire to assert his independence. He was encouraged so to do by the king of Egypt, and at first he seemed to have succeeded; but in 701 Sennacherib, the son and successor of Sargon, having established his authority in other quarters, turned his attention to the West. He invaded Phoenicia and reduced its cities so rapidly that many of the neighboring peoples voluntarily returned to their allegiance. Hezekiah and some of the Philistines, relying on the promises of the Egyptians, continued in rebellion. When the Assyrian king was ready to move southward he first attacked and captured Ashkelon. Then, as he was besieging Ekron, the Egyptians made their appearance; but Sennacherib met and defeated them at Eltekeh, and then, returning, took the Philistine city and severely punished its inhabitants for their stubbornness. Finally, he sent a part of his army to ravage Judah, while he himself, with the main body, proceeded to Lachish. When Hezekiah saw his country wasted, and the Assyrian soldiery at the very gates of Jerusalem, he made haste to beg for mercy, pay a heavy indemnity, and bind himself thenceforth to

render a corresponding annual tribute. Later, as Sennacherib was moving upon Egypt, his army was overtaken by a mysterious disaster, and he returned to Assyria; but he retained his hold on Palestine, and the Judean king remained his vassal.

These events were watched by the prophet Isaiah with the deepest interest and made the occasion for warning, encouragement, or instruction, whichever he at any time felt impelled to utter. Thus, he warned Ahaz not to appeal to Tiglath-pileser against Pekah and Resin, assuring him that, if he had the faith to wait, he would see his enemies overthrown without taking upon himself the Assyrian yoke.[1] He took account of the growing corruption and disorder in Israel, and foretold the speedy destruction of that kingdom.[2] He perceived, as few, if any, others did, the unreliability of the Egyptians, and warned the Philistines, as well as his own people, not to trust in such an ally.[3] To the end he insisted that, if the Jews put their trust in Yahweh alone, they would need no other defense. Hence, when Sennacherib threatened Jerusalem, his counsel was, "By sitting[4] still shall ye be saved; in quiet and confidence shall be your strength."[5] Meanwhile, like Amos, with whose prophecies he was evidently familiar, he sought to dispel the errors and banish the corruption that prevailed in his day, and prepare his people for the acme of happiness and prosperity under an ideal ruler, the mirror and

[1] Isa. 7:4 ff. [2] Isa. 9:7 ff.

[3] Isa. 20:3 ff.; 30:1 ff.; 31:1 ff.

[4] The reading of the received text, "returning" is a palpable error due to the close similarity of two Hebrew verbs elsewhere, also, mistaken for each other. See Isa. 1:27.

[5] Isa. 30:15.

instrument of the divine will, for whose advent in the near future he taught them to look and labor.[1]

Isaiah was keenly sensitive to ethical values. This appears in his account of his call, 6:1 ff. That passage, however, has often been misunderstood. The word "holy" as there applied to Yahweh does not mean morally perfect, but absolutely transcendent with reference to everything finite, and therefore worthy of universal reverence and adoration. Hence, "the Holy One of Israel," a phrase that seems to have originated with Isaiah, is equivalent to "the God of Israel." The result of the manifestation of this holiness, or, as Paul puts it, "his eternal power and divinity," is the "glory" with which, Isaiah declares, "the whole earth is full." When the prophet saw it he was overwhelmed and condemned himself, a mere man, with the imperfections of a man, for taking upon his lips, as in the act of worship he had just done, the name of so exalted a being. "Woe is me," he says, "for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips."

A man thus sensitive would naturally insist upon personal morality in other worshipers of Yahweh. It is not strange, therefore, to find him, in the fifth chapter of his prophecies, where he catalogues the crying evils of his day, making especially prominent the abuse of wine and other means of intoxication. "Woe," he exclaims, "to them that rise early in the morning to pursue strong drink; and tarry late in the evening until wine inflames them."[2] A little later,

[1] Isa. 9:1 ff.; 11:1 ff.

[2] Isa. 5:11. The word here rendered "inflame" sometimes has the sense of "chase" (Gen. 31:36), a fact that the prophet must have had in mind when he selected it for this connection.

namely, in vs. 22, he pronounces a second "woe" upon drunkards, or, as he describes them, those who are "mighty—to drink wine" and "men of strength—to mingle strong drink." In chap. 28 he returns to the subject in one of the most scathing utterances to be found in his prophecies. He first recalls a passage in which he has described Samaria as "the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim,"[1] and then pictures the dissolute habits of the priests and prophets of Judah.[2]

Isaiah was doubtless as severe in his condemnation of unchastity as of drunkenness, but there is nowhere in his extant prophecies a direct reference to this evil; for, in 1:10, the rulers of Sodom and Gomorrah are the leaders in a city threatened with a destruction as complete as that of the cities of the Plain; and in 1:21, as appears from the context, Jerusalem is called a harlot, as an abode, not of impurity, but of injustice.[3] The absence of such references can hardly mean that the prophet had no occasion for them, but must be explained as due to the incompleteness of the record of his utterances.

In his ethical teaching Isaiah concerns himself chiefly with social conditions. In his day they were much the same in Judah as they had been in Israel when Amos prophesied. There had been so great an increase in wealth that the land seemed to be "full of silver and gold,"[4] but this wealth was so unevenly distributed that the poor were about as numerous and miserable as ever. Moreover, matters were growing worse rather than

[1] Vs. 1.
[2] Vss. 7 f.
[3] See also vss. 26 f.
[4] Isa. 2:7.

better, through the fault, as Isaiah believed, of the upper classes. In the first place, prosperity, instead of bringing contentment, had only whetted their appetite for gain, and they were adding "house to house and field to field" so rapidly that it seemed as if they would soon "dwell alone in the midst of the land"; in other words, having dispossessed the small owners, they covered the country with their large estates.[1] Isaiah justly condemned such a policy.

The prophet also charges the rulers of his people with adding to their wealth by robbing the poor. In the name of Yahweh he declares, "It is ye who have cropped the vineyard," that is, robbed those whom they should have protected; "the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye, that ye crush my people, and grind the faces of the poor? saith Yahweh of Hosts."[2] A favorite method with the robbers in Isaiah's, as in Amos' day, was to bring suit against the intended victim and bribe the judge with a share in the proceeds of their joint knavery. Cases of this sort were so frequent in Judah in the time of Isaiah that justice became a by-word. Addressing Jerusalem, he says, "Thy princes are unprincipled. They all love a bribe, chase after fees; and, as for the cause of the widow, it doth not reach them."[3] One of his woes is directed against those that "acquit the guilty for a bribe, while the innocent they rob of his innocence."[4] In another he describes the same class as those who "record iniquitous judgments, and the writers that engross trouble; turning the lowly from judgment and robbing the afflicted

[1] Isa. 5:8.
[2] Isa. 3:14 f.
[3] Isa. 1:23.
[4] Isa. 5:23.

among my people of justice; so that widows are their prey, and orphans their plunder."[1] This was the great evil of the times. When, therefore, Isaiah undertook to define religion, his formula was, not a tariff of sacrifices, but the exhortation, "Seek justice, correct the oppressor, judge the orphan, defend the widow";[2] and, when he was required to propose a remedy for the ills that had befallen his people, he declared that Zion must be "redeemed by justice, and they that dwell therein through righteousness."[3] He insisted that there was nothing but trouble in store for those who called "evil good, and good evil," reversing the dictates of ordinary morality. It was as foolish and disastrous, he said, as to put "darkness for light, and light for darkness," or "bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."[4]

The ideal that Isaiah set before his generation, and bequeathed to those that followed, involved the same doctrine. This ideal is presented in the messianic passages properly attributed to him. The prophecy in 7:14, to which a messianic interpretation is given by a later writer in Mic. 5:3, as well as Matt. 1:23, is not such a passage; for the woman there mentioned is not a virgin, but any young woman who may bear a son at the end of the usual period, while the child has no definite character and no function except by his name to register the passage of the Syrian crisis. The famous utterance in 9:5 f., on the other hand, is genuinely messianic in character, that is to say, it forecasts a new era and describes a person whom, when the time comes, Yahweh can use for the accomplishment of his purpose

[1] Isa. 10:1.
[2] Isa. 1:17.
[3] Isa. 1:27.
[4] Isa. 5:20.

concerning his people. He will have great power and achieve wonderful success, but the aim and glory of his administration will be, not his own aggrandizement, but the establishment "by justice and righteousness" of the kingdom of David for all time to come.

The same ideal is more fully set forth in 11:1 ff. Here, again, the hope of the Chosen People is in a scion of the house of David, whose union and communion with Yahweh will be so intimate that he will have the resources of divinity at his command, and here, again, his chief function is the administration of justice. "In righteousness shall he judge the lowly, and with equity decide for the humble of the land; and he shall smite the violent with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the godless. Yea, righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the cincture of his reins." The great commandment, then, in Isaiah's eyes is justice, impartial and unfailing. Thus it appears that the teaching of Isaiah was practically that of Amos, except that, while Amos despaired of Israel, Isaiah believed that the condition on which alone Yahweh would or could bless Judah would one day be fulfilled.

The acquaintance of Isaiah with the prophecies of Amos has been mentioned. The truth is, that the former, in his earlier utterances, so clearly follows the latter in style as well as in content that he may fairly be called a disciple of the shepherd of Tekoa. Nor does he, on the points on which it is possible to compare the two, go much, if any, beyond his predecessor. It is strange that this should be true of their attitude toward foreigners. Amos recognized them as creatures of

Yahweh, guided by him in their history, and responsible to him for their conduct toward one another, as well as toward the Hebrews. He did not have occasion to express himself with reference to their future. If he had, he could hardly have shown less interest in their fate than does Isaiah. Indeed, the latter, although, like Amos, he represents the Assyrians as instruments of Yahweh,[1] when he comes to portray the future in 9:2 ff. and 11:1 ff.,[2] assigns them no share in the blessings his people will enjoy under the beneficent rule of the Prince of Peace.[3]

2. MICAH

The book of Micah begins with an oracle against Israel, and 3:12, according to Jer. 26:18, was uttered in the reign of Hezekiah. This prophet, therefore, was a contemporary of Isaiah and had practically the same conditions as a background for his prophecies. There was, however, this difference in their points of view, that, whereas Isaiah seems to have been a native, or, at least, a resident, of Jerusalem, Micah's home was in the country, and his training, like that of Amos, outside the immediate influence of the capital. It would have been strange, therefore, if he had not condemned the evils of his time, when he came to realize their seriousness, even more severely than Isaiah, and expressed himself less optimistically with reference to the future of their common race and country.

[1] Isa. 10:5 f.

[2] It is taken for granted that these passages were written by Isaiah, although, as is well known, there are scholars who deny their genuineness.

[3] In Isa. 11:4, for "earth" read "land" in both cases.

Micah does not undertake to picture, as did Isaiah, the disgusting excesses of his people, but he clearly enough intimates that drunkenness was very prevalent and that he had as little patience with it as his colleague; for, in replying to an attempt to silence him, he says, "If one came to them whom a false spirit had misled, saying, I will prophesy to thee of wine and strong drink, he would be the prophet of this people."[1] So largely was their life occupied and dominated by their unnatural appetites.

Micah reminds Samaria of its unfaithfulness,[2] but in the social world the evil above all others was the prostitution of justice, the result of insatiable lust for gain. The prophet accuses the rulers of an utter disregard for right and wrong in their relations with their less wealthy or powerful neighbors. "Is it not," he indignantly demands, "yours to know justice? ye who hate good and love evil, who tear their skins off them, and their flesh off their bones."[3] The injustice practiced is not the result of caprice or passion, but a deliberate policy. These recreant rulers "devise iniquity on their beds," and, "when morning breaks, practice it, because it is within their power." Thus, "they covet fields and seize them; and houses, and take them away" from their proper owners; "and they oppress a man and his house, yea, a man and his heritage."[4] They treat their own people worse than foreigners and enemies, robbing them without provocation, separating the women from their tender children, and finally depriving the children themselves of their heritage in

[1] Mic. 2:11.
[2] Mic. 1:5.
[3] Mic. 3:1 f.
[4] Mic. 2:1 f.

Yahweh by selling them as slaves into foreign countries.[1] In 3:9 ff. he couples the priests and the prophets with the rulers in a scathing indictment: "Hear this, I pray you, ye chiefs of the house of Jacob, and rulers of the house of Israel; who abhor justice, and pervert all equity; who build Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. Its chiefs decide for a bribe, and its priests teach for a price, and its prophets divine for money." These last say, because they are hired so to do, "Is not Yahweh in the midst of us? There shall no evil come upon us." They are the special objects of the prophet's contempt and sarcasm. It is theirs above all others to discern between right and wrong, clearly to commend the one and condemn the other, and in case of need to defend any who are denied their rights against their oppressors. Yet they, too, close their eyes to obvious wrongs and the consequences—for a consideration, or, to put it with all Micah's bluntness, "when they have something to bite with their teeth they cry, Peace; but against him who putteth not into their mouths they declare war."[2]

These are the false prophets, over against whom Micah places the genuine man of God, taking himself for an illustration. "But I," he says, "am full of strength, and justice, and courage to declare to Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin."[3] Only a man conscious of rectitude could thus have invited scrutiny and criticism; but he boldly hurls this challenge to his adversaries, firm in his moral integrity, keen in his moral vision, and brave enought to accept, proclaim, and defend his moral judgments, an ideal prophet of the Old Testament.

[1] Mic. 2:8 f. [2] Mic. 3:5. [3] Mic. 3:8.

Thus far references have been made only to the first three chapters of the book that bears the name of Micah, the reason being that some modern critics doubt or deny the genuineness of the remaining four. The question need not be discussed in this connection, since it is only 6:1—7:6 that contains anything material to the present purpose, and there is nothing of ethical significance in this section that has not already been found current with other prophets. The passage will best be understood as a representation of the condition of northern Palestine just before, or after, the overthrow of Samaria, or, as 6:13 puts it, when Yahweh had "begun to smite" the offender. The chastisement already inflicted has not borne fruit. This the nation personified confesses in 7:1 ff., saying that "the pious man hath vanished from the land (not "earth"), and there is not an upright one among men." The ties of nature are no longer respected. Indeed, so demoralized has the family become that "a man's" most dangerous "enemies are those of his own house."[1] There is just as little confidence to be placed in the solemn pledges of friendship.[2] As for business, it is still, as in the time of Amos, but a transparent mask for robbery.[3] Thus every man's hand is against every other, and it is war to the death.[4] The rich are the chief offenders, because they always have it in their power to do evil, if not directly, by means of the forms of law, bribing the judges to sanction their iniquities.[5]

All this is more obnoxious to Yahweh than to the moral sense of mankind. What then does he require? This question finds as complete an answer in 6:6–8 as

[1] Mic. 7:6. [3] Mic. 6:11 f. [5] Mic. 7:3.
[2] Mic. 7:5. [4] Mic. 7:2.

anywhere in the Hebrew Scriptures. The author of this passage, like Amos and Hosea, had to combat the notion that religion was a matter of offerings, and that one who was rich enough could bribe God as he could an earthly judge. There were those who were willing to pay pretty dearly for the divine favor, as when Mesha sacrificed his eldest son to Moloch.[1] This idea is dramatically presented in the question, "Wherewithal shall I approach Yahweh, bow before God on high? Shall I approach him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will Yahweh be pleased with thousands of rams, with myriads of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" The answer puts the earthly, human side of religion first: "He hath told thee, man, what is good; and what doth Yahweh require of thee but to do justly, and love kindness, and walk humbly with thy God?"[2]

[1] II Kings 3:27.

[2] Amos 5:21 ff.; Isa. 1:10 ff.

CHAPTER XII

SECONDARY ELEMENTS IN THE JUDEAN AND EPHRAIMITE NARRATIVES

1. THE SECOND YAHWIST (J^2) IN THE EARLY CHAPTERS OF GENESIS

In a previous chapter attention was called to the significance of the Ephraimite version of the story of Abimelech the son of Gideon,[1] in which the doctrine of divine retribution taught by Amos is distinctly inculcated. It is the early chapters of Genesis, however, in which this doctrine is set forth most clearly and impressively. This is done, in the first place, partly by a rearrangement of the original text of the Judean narrative, and partly by additions to this work from a later one by a writer of the same school.

The form of the stories with which the Judean narrative originally began, and the purpose of the author in his use of them, have already been discussed. They were simply current stories of primeval times, selected for their literary availability, and put together for the amusement or instruction of those who had a literary or patriotic interest in the traditional lore of the Hebrews. It is difficult to determine the precise order in which they were originally arranged, but it is clear that 9:20 ff. belongs with 4:17–24 and 5:29. When the Judean account of the Flood was inserted, and Noah the son of Lemech identified with the hero of that event, the order was changed, since otherwise the favor shown the

[1] Judg. 9:1–23, 42–57.

family of Noah, including Shem, Japheth, and Canaan, would have seemed without justification. At the same time, by the insertion of the story of Cain and Abel, there was produced a series of events that could be interpreted as manifestations of the deterioration of human nature. Thus, the third chapter became a record of "man's first disobedience"; the story of Cain and Abel[1] marked the advent of hatred and violence into the world; the Cainite genealogy, with the song of Lemech,[2] illustrated the growing neglect, and final repudiation, of God; and the story of the sons of God and the daughters of men[3] registered the triumph of lust among mankind. To such a history, on the supposition that there is a holy, righteous, and omnipotent God, as Amos taught, the only fitting sequel was a universal catastrophe, and the editor who made the changes noted saw in an early deluge, of which the Hebrews, as well as the Babylonians, had preserved a traditional account, the instrumentality by which the race as a whole was obliterated. This seems rather high-handed and, in a modern writer, would justly be condemned as unwarrantable license. The author in question, however, must not be judged by the same canons as modern historians. The modern historian goes about his work as a scientist pursues his investigations. He first gathers his materials and carefully sifts them, allowing no fact to escape him, but vigorously rejecting any alleged event that does not at least square with probability. Then he arranges his data in chronological order, and establishes the connection, if there is any, among them. Finally, he deduces from this

[1] Gen. 4:1 ff. [2] Gen. 4:17 ff. [3] Gen. 6:1 f., 4.

sequence of events any principles which they illustrate, and the lessons which they contain for his own or future generations. The prophet—for the author of the revised Judean narrative was a prophet as truly as was Amos—did not go about his task in that way. He began at the other end of the process. He began with a truth, or something that he believed to be true, and, having become convinced, not only of its truth, but of its practical importance, proceeded to illustrate and enforce it. He naturally sought his illustrations within the limits of the knowledge of those whom he wished to influence. If they had a story that would serve his purpose, he used it, undisturbed by the question whether it had ever before been similarly interpreted or, indeed, whether the incident described was real or fictitious. It was enough for him that by means of it he could bring his thought vividly to the attention of his readers. When he had done so he felt that he could trust it, with the help of the divine Spirit, to take care of itself. In the present instance the important truth to be taught was the central doctrine of the Book of Amos, that there is a supreme Power, and that he "works for righteousness," or, as the Psalmist more picturesquely puts it, "righteousness and judgment are the foundation of his throne."[1] This being his message, how could he have brought it more forcibly home to a violent and voluptuous generation than by the (to him) godless pride of Lemech and the unbridled license of fallen sons of God? And how could he more effectively have presented the terrible consequences of the existing corruption than by rehearsing the terrors of a catastrophe that was recognized as

[1] Ps. 97:2.

marking the close of an era in the early history of mankind? There can be no doubt that the Judean narrative in the revised form, though less interesting from the literary point of view, was, in its day, a more useful vehicle of moral and religious instruction than the original work.

It is not necessary to go into a more detailed analysis of the later Judean elements in the early chapters of Genesis, but there is one point that should not be overlooked, an inconsistency that is both curious and instructive. In the story of Cain and Abel the murderer complains that the sentence pronounced upon him is too severe, and Yahweh sets a sign upon him to prevent anyone from putting him to death. It has always been a question whom Cain feared, but this is not the only difficulty. In the earliest times there was a so-called "*lex talionis*" according to which it was the duty of the next of kin to avenge the victim of a murder upon the murderer. Had this law been followed, Cain must have died for his crime; but Yahweh intervened, just as David did in the case of the son of the widow of Tekoa,[1] and the hand of justice was stayed, so to speak, by the exercise of "executive clemency." The author of the story would probably have explained that, had Cain been put to death, the increase and development of mankind would have been too seriously retarded.

2. LATER JUDEAN AND EPHRAIMITE ADDITIONS BEFORE AND DURING COMPILATION

The additions to the Judean narrative in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, as explained in the preceding section, are supposed to have been taken mostly from

[1] II Sam. 14:10 f.

another continuous work. There are other passages in this narrative that seem to be of a still later date, and rather redactional in character, having been inserted from time to time while it had a separate existence. The Ephraimite narrative had a similar history. Finally, when the two were united, the compiler took upon himself, not only to omit from the one or the other in certain places, but to adapt and enlarge to suit his own ideas or convictions. Thus there are three classes of supplementary matter, but, since they are all comparatively late and have a certain resemblance, making it difficult in some cases to classify passages with respect to authorship, they may all be discussed under one general head.

First, there are some passages of which it may pretty safely be asserted that they belonged to the Judean narrative in its final form. Perhaps the most interesting among them is Gen. 18:23b–33a. These verses, which are a part of the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, describe how Abraham undertook to intercede for the threatened cities, especially Sodom, pleading that there might be a number of righteous persons among its inhabitants, and it would be unjust to destroy them. Yahweh admits the plea and agrees to spare the city if fifty such persons can be found there to furnish an excuse for his clemency. The patriarch, having gained so much, presses his case, gradually reducing the required number, until Yahweh has promised to abandon his purpose if there can be found even ten who deserve preservation. The passage seems to be an attempt to justify the divine severity, as pictured in the original story; but as such it is very unsatisfactory, since, in the first place, Yahweh was not restricted to

the alternatives presented, and, secondly, there would have been as little justice in letting the unrepentant multitude go unpunished as in destroying with them a handful who did not deserve such a fate. The underlying doctrine is that of vicarious righteousness, which finally became a favorite one with the Jews,[1] but which is expressly repudiated by Ezekiel in 14:13 f., where he makes Yahweh say, "When a land sinneth against me by committing a trespass, and I stretch out my hand upon it, ... though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness." In the sequel of the story of the cities of the Plain, according to the original author, Yahweh is represented as solving the problem of Sodom's fate by simply separating the righteous from the wicked and rescuing the former before he destroyed the latter.

This passage betrays, to be sure, a certain degree of ethical uneasiness, but it also indicates that the author lacked the moral insight that characterized the great prophets who preceded him. The same is true of Exod. 33:18 f., if, with Paul,[2] one interprets it naturally as a general declaration to the effect that the grace of God is conditioned only by his sovereign will. See also Exod. 34:6 f., where a still later hand has added the qualifying statement, "and that doth by no means clear," or, better, "doth not let go entirely unpunished," "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation." It would seem, therefore, as if the old prophets had done their work too well, creating a sense of indesert so deep that those who came

[1] Weber, *APT*, 280 ff. [2] Rom. 9:15.

after them could find relief from it only in a doctrine of arbitrary and unconditional grace.

One of the things that the Hebrews seem to have had on their collective conscience was the transfer of the royal office from Saul to his rival David. The earlier records make clear that it was a political necessity, and that it was brought about with as little rancour and bloodshed as could have been expected; but later writers sought excuses for it. The author of I Sam. 13:7b–15 is one of them. He says that Saul was rejected because, when he had mustered a force at Gilgal, he proceeded with his preparations for war and offered a presumably customary sacrifice without waiting for Samuel; but the weakness of this explanation appears when one considers that in Saul's time it was perfectly proper for him to perform such a rite; that, if one was necessary before beginning the campaign, it was high time to perform it, since the Philistines were preparing an attack, while Saul's army was daily dwindling before his eyes in anticipation of it; and, finally, that Samuel, who had promised to come to Gilgal by a certain date, had failed to fulfil his engagement. There is some doubt about these alleged facts, but the author takes them for granted, and, in so doing, challenges the judgment of the reader, who will hardly find the king guilty of anything deserving the severity with which the prophet is reported to have treated him.

The secondary matter in the Ephraimite narrative is not all germane to the present discussion, but there are various passages that are, and these should not be neglected. The first passage that demands special

attention is the story of the elders in Num. 11:16 f. and 24b–30. It is remarkable for the humility and liberality therein attributed to Moses, who, when it was reported that two of the men who had been summoned to the tabernacle, but had not appeared, had received the spirit in the camp, and Joshua proposed to silence them, replied, "Art thou jealous for my sake? O that all Yahweh's people were prophets; that Yahweh would put his spirit upon them!" The following chapter[1] has another story illustrating the humility of the lawgiver, whom it describes as "very meek, above all the men that were on the face of the earth."[2] In this case he is also very magnanimous, for, although Miriam had been justly punished for attacking him, at Aaron's request he interceded for her and procured her release from the malady with which she had been smitten.

The second Ephraimite has his own version of the story of Samuel and his relations with Saul. According to him Samuel was an Ephraimite, but, being devoted to Yahweh, he was reared as a priest at Shiloh.[3] While he was yet a child Yahweh appeared to him and revealed to him the impending fall of the house of Eli.[4] He finally became a great prophet, also ruling Israel as judge for many years.[5] When he became old, because his sons did not walk in his steps, the people asked him to give them a king; which, after a serious warning and protest, he finally consented to do.[6] The election took place at Mizpah, where Samuel gave an account of his stewardship and adjured both the king and the

[1] Num., chap. 12.
[2] Vs. 3.
[3] I Sam., chap. 1.
[4] I Sam. 3:1 ff.
[5] I Sam. 7:2 ff.
[6] I Sam. 8:1 ff.

people to remain faithful to Yahweh.[1] Finally, however, he broke with Saul and recalled his approval of the election, declaring that the young man had been rejected by Yahweh.[2]

This story can hardly be regarded as historical, but it has value as reflecting the ethical ideas of the Hebrews of the first half of the seventh century B.C. In the first place it breathes strong condemnation of the vice of drunkenness: witness Eli's sternness with Hannah while he thought her under the influence of wine, and the good woman's own horror at the idea of being in such a condition.[3]

The same chapter presents an interesting and instructive picture of the domestic life of the Hebrews, their passion for children, the jealousy and consequent unhappiness of rival wives, and the sympathy and tenderness of which the Hebrew husband was capable.[4]

These later Ephraimite additions are most prolific on the subject of official morality. The author describes the conduct of the priests, the sons of Eli, in their office. They were not content, he says, with the definite share in a sacrifice assigned to them, but, when the flesh was being cooked for the sacrificial meal, they came with a three-tined fork and took all that they could lift from the pot and carry away on it. Sometimes, indeed, before the flesh had been placed over the fire, or the fat burned to Yahweh, they sent a demand

[1] I Sam., chap. 12. [2] I Sam. 15:24 ff.

[3] I Sam. 1:11 ff. In 2:22 the sons of Eli are accused of illicit intercourse with the women who served in the sanctuary, but the latter half of this verse is an interpolation borrowed from Exod. 38:8.

[4] I Sam. 1:1 ff.

for raw flesh, and took it by force if anyone objected.[1] There were similar abuses in the administration of justice. Not, however, in the case of Samuel. He was so faithful that, when, toward the close of his life, the people demanded a king, he could safely challenge them to find a blot on his record.[2] "Here I am," he says; "witness against me before Yahweh and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or from whose hand have I taken a bribe, to blind therewith my eyes? and I will restore it to you"; and they were obliged to confess that he had not been guilty of any of these wrongs. His sons, however, like those of Eli, so far from imitating his example, "turned aside after lucre, took bribes, and perverted justice";[3] and this is given as the reason for the popular movement in favor of a monarchy.[4] At this point is introduced the remarkable sketch of the future king by which the prophet sought to turn his people from their purpose. It is not historical in the sense of reproducing what Samuel said on a given occasion, since it clearly presupposes the reign of Solomon, but it is trustworthy as an expression of the sentiment among the prophets of the end of the eighth, and the beginning of the seventh, century B.C. concerning the monarchy. Hosea, it will be remembered, regarded its establishment as a revolt from Yahweh which had provoked the divine wrath and brought nothing but calamities.[5] The author of the description cited is of the same opinion. These are the words he puts into the mouth

[1] I Sam. 2:12 ff. [3] I Sam. 8:3. [5] Hos. 10:9; 13:10 f.
[2] I Sam. 12:3 f. [4] I Sam. 8:5.

of Yahweh: "Hearken to the voice of the people in all that they say to thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them." Then comes the picture, suggested, as has been observed, by reminiscences of Solomon, but realized to a greater or less extent in the best of his successors in both kingdoms. For, it should be noted, the king here described is not a tyrant in the abnormal sense of the word, but simply an autocrat, and the evils are those that naturally, and, to the author's mind, inevitably, accompany the exercise of irresponsible power. If the author had been writing from the standpoint of his own time, instead of that of the heroic age, he might have cited, not only Solomon, but David and Ahab and their capricious violations of recognized rights.

There is one more passage that should be cited in this connection, because it illustrates another phase of the tendency that showed itself in I Sam. 13:7b–15. There the author sought to justify the rejection of Saul, and thus by implication relieve David of any suspicion of usurpation. The passage in question, II Sam. 7:1–12 and 14–29, marks a further step in the same direction; for, although its author does not, like the Chronicler,[1] give David the credit of having "prepared abundantly" for the temple built by his son, he pictures the old king as a pattern of piety who would himself have built a house for Yahweh, had he not, on expressing such an intention, received through Nathan divine instructions to the contrary. It is this idealized David who became the type of the king of the Hebrews' golden future.

[1] I Chron. 22:2 ff.

When the Judean and Ephraimite narratives were united, the compiler made some additions by way of adjustment or amplification, and there were doubtless later accretions of a similar character. Some of these passages have no ethical significance, but there are others that should here receive attention. In the first place, there are several in which the blessings promised to the fathers are brought to prominent notice. The first is Gen. 13:14–17, where Yahweh says to Abraham, among other things, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that, if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed be numbered." See also Gen. 22:14–18, where a similar comparison is made with "the stars of heaven" and "the sand that is on the seashore"; and finally the renewal of this promise to Isaac[1] and Jacob.[2] The bearing of these passages on the subject in hand is found in the fact that the promise therein contained, or its equivalent, is elsewhere cited in cases in which ethical considerations are involved. Thus, in Exod. 32:7–14, where Yahweh, in his indignation because his people have broken their covenant with him, exclaims, "Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and I may consume them," Moses finally overcomes the divine resentment by pleading this promise. "Remember," he says (vs. 13), "Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, saying, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever." The story concludes with the statement that "Yahweh

[1] Gen. 26:3b–5. [2] Gen. 32:9–12.

repented of the evil that he said he would do to his people." It will be observed that there is here no reference to repentance or amendment on the part of the people as a ground for the desired change in the attitude of Yahweh toward them; so that what Moses really asks Yahweh to do is to fulfil his part in a covenant that his people show no disposition to observe, in other words, to make them the objects of the arbitrary and unconditional grace of 33:18 f. It amounts to the same thing when, in Num. 14:11–16, Yahweh having threatened to smite the Israelites "with the pestilence and disinherit them," because they refused to invade Canaan from Kadesh, Moses enters the subtle plea, "If thou shalt kill this people as one man, then the nations that have heard report of thee will speak, saying, Because Yahweh was not able to bring his people to the land that he swore to them, therefore hath he slain them in the desert."[1] Mention should also be made of Exod. 32:30–34. Here, however, Moses succeeds in persuading Yahweh only to postpone the punishment he was on the point of inflicting.

In the passages thus far cited there is evidence of the disturbance of the ethical development of the Hebrews by theological influences. In Judges and Samuel the editorial additions, like those from the second Judean and Ephraimite writers, are of an apologetic character. Thus, Judg. 11:12–28 is an elaborate attempt to establish the claim of the Hebrews to the country between the Arnon and the Jabbok, and justify the war in which Jephthah won it from the invading Ammonites. In Samuel the object of the author of them seems to have

[1] Exod. 32:12.

been to protect David from a charge of having betrayed Saul or deprived his son of the succession. Thus, to cite the last first, II Sam. 21:2b dwells upon the breach of faith of which Saul was guilty in his treatment of the Gibeonites. In I Sam. 28:17 f. Samuel is represented as reminding the unfortunate king of his failure to execute the "fierce wrath" of Yahweh upon the Amalekites, and the decree by which at that time Yahweh "rent the kingdom" from him and gave it to David. Moreover, both Saul and Jonathan are made to renounce any claim to the throne in favor of the son of Jesse. This is the declaration that is put into the mouth of Saul at En-gedi, "I know that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thy hand." All he asks is that David will not rob him of a posterity, and this request the young man, although the ethics of the time hardly required him to cherish possible rivals, he readily took an oath to fulfil. According to I Sam. 20:4–17 and 40–42, Jonathan had some time before this foreseen the fall of his own house, and acquiesced in the will of Yahweh, only pledging his friend not to neglect to be kind to the survivors, when Yahweh had "cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth," that is, when David had come to undisputed possession of the royal authority.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DEUTERONOMIC ETHICS

1. THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

The Book of Deuteronomy in its present form, it is generally admitted, is a composite production. In the first place, there are portions of it that have evidently been added or edited to adapt them to the place they now occupy at the end of the Pentateuch. But, when these are removed, there still remains evidence pointing to two or more authors. The most striking proof of its composite authorship is the alternation of the plural with the singular of the second person in the parts in which Moses is represented as addressing his people. Thus, in chap. 12, vss. 1, 5, 7, 9, and 16 have both forms, the rest of vss. 1–12 only the plural, and vss. 13–15 and 17–31 only the singular. Moreover, it will be found that vss. 2–12 duplicate vss. 13–15 and 17–31, but that, while the latter passage gives prominence to the centralization of worship, the former emphasizes the destruction of the native cults of Canaan. The simplest of the theories based on these and related facts is to the effect that Deuteronomy originally had a briefer form in which the pronoun used by Moses in his addresses was always singular, and that this book was later revised and enlarged by a second writer who sometimes imitated the style of the original, but naturally, and therefore generally, employed the plural. The dates at which these two authors wrote must lie between 722 and 621 B.C., since it is clear that there would hardly have been

an attempt to maintain that the law of Moses required all Israel to worship at one sanctuary until after the Northern Kingdom had been overthrown; and it is more than probable, from the description of Josiah's reforms, that the book on which those reforms were based was Deuteronomy in a revised and expanded form. On the whole it may safely be concluded that the original work was compiled early in the reign of Manasseh (686–639 B.C.), and that the second edition was prepared toward the end of the same reign.[1] It must, however, be observed, that the original of Deuteronomy was itself a compilation, and that, as will appear when it is studied more in detail, the parts of it that are ethically most productive are largely based on the Ephraimite code of Exod., chaps. 21–23. The method of treating it must therefore be that of comparison, first of the older parts with their Ephraimite or other original, and then of the differing strata in it with one another.

The Deuteronomic Code is emphatic with reference to impurity. Sodomy and prostitution are expressly forbidden in Israel, and, lest these forms of vice should be permitted in the Hebrew temple, as they were at the Canaanite sanctuaries, for the sake of the revenue derived from them, the people are prohibited from bringing to the house of Yahweh "the hire of a harlot or the wages of a dog," the latter being another name

[1] Steuernagel, in his commentary on Deuteronomy and Joshua (vi f.), supposes that there were originally two independent works, in one of which, compiled about 690 B.C., the singular was used, and in the other, twenty years younger, the plural, and that they were united by an editor about 650 B.C.

for the male hierodule.[1] This is an addition to the Ephraimite Code, but more significant is the specification of two forms of indecency, immodest seizure of a man by a woman, punished by the loss of the offending hand,[2] and the interchange of garments between the sexes,[3] which was a feature of Canaanite worship and in itself morally objectionable.

The new law does not radically change domestic custom and usage, but it introduces some just and humane safeguards. Thus, polygamy is retained, but it is ordained that, if a man have two wives, both of whom have borne him children, the eldest son shall have the rights and the portion of the first-born, even if he is the child of the less favored wife.[4]

The law concerning divorce makes provision only for cases in which the wife is at fault, stipulating that, if a woman who has been dismissed by her husband marries again, she cannot, if freed by death or divorce from her second husband, return to the first.[5] Compare the Code of Hammurabi,[6] according to which a woman unjustly disliked by her husband could leave him and take her marriage portion with her.

The most radical law on the subject of marriage is that abolishing the custom according to which a son inherited his father's wife or wives.[7] The child of such a union, or any other incestuous relation, was forbidden admission to the assembly.

[1] Deut. 23:17 f.
[2] Deut. 25:11 f.
[3] Deut. 22:5.
[4] Deut. 21:15–17.
[5] Deut. 24:1–4.
[6] § 142.
[7] Deut. 22:30.

The subject of adultery is dealt with in detail. The man who falsely accuses his wife of not having been a virgin when he married her must pay a fine of a hundred shekels and "may not put her away all his days." If, however, the charge proves true, she is to be stoned.[1] Both parties in a case of illicit intercourse are to be put to death if the woman is married;[2] also when she is only betrothed, unless she is a victim of violence.[3] In the latter case only the man has to suffer.[4] These paragraphs on adultery are new, but the one on seduction[5] is a variation on that of Exod. 22:16 f., the Ephraimite Code prescribing that the seducer shall purchase the girl if her father will give her to him in marriage, or pay a fine "according to the dowry of virgins," while this one requires that he shall marry her, paying her father fifty shekels, without the right to divorce her as he might another woman. The size of the bride-price is noticeable, as evidently calculated to discourage this species of lawlessness. The same effect would naturally be produced by the exclusion of bastards from the assembly.[6]

The Ephraimite Code directed that a son who smote his father or his mother should be put to death;[7] this one[8] prescribes the same penalty for obstinate disobedience, making the execution a solemn ceremony so that "all Israel may hear and fear."

Besides the children belonging to his proper family a Hebrew might have a son reckoned as the offspring of a deceased brother, in accordance with the so-called

[1] Deut. 22:13–21.
[2] Deut. 22:22.
[3] Deut. 22:23 f.
[4] Deut. 22:25–27.
[5] Deut. 22:28 f.
[6] Deut. 23:2.
[7] Exod. 21:15.
[8] Deut. 21:18–21.

levirate law. This law was in force among the Hebrews from the earliest times.[1] The object of it is evident, namely, to prevent the extinction of the families of those whom death might overtake before they had sons to represent them. In Deuteronomy[2] this law is modified and restricted, that it may not work the hardship which must sometimes have followed the original custom. In the first place, the operation of it is confined to cases in which two brothers "dwell together," either on the same estate or in the same neighborhood. Secondly, it is here only the first-born of such a marriage who is to be reckoned to the deceased husband. Finally, a way is left by which the surviving brother may escape the obligation imposed upon him, if he is willing to bear the reproach of refusing to perform a generally recognized duty. This seems a rather severe alternative, but it is probable that in process of time, as one after another from necessity adopted it, the ceremony prescribed ceased to be a serious matter.[3]

The new code is more generous toward slaves than the old one. In the first place, the master is exhorted, when, at the end of six years, he releases a Hebrew servant, not to let him go "empty," but to "furnish him liberally" from the stores with which Yahweh has blessed him.[4] Moreover, the female slave, as well as the male, is to be treated in this liberal fashion. This is a noteworthy modification of Exod. 21:7–11, where it is expressly ordained that a Hebrew maid-servant "shall not go out as the men-servants do." The change seems to have grown out of the fact that, whereas, in

[1] Gen., chap. 38.

[2] Deut. 25:5–10.

[3] Cf. Ruth 4:1 ff.

[4] Deut. 15:12–14.

earlier days among the Hebrews concubines were commonly slaves of their own race, as time passed foreign women took their places. This view is favored by the circumstance that in Deut. 21:10–14 there is introduced a law relative to female captives according to which, if a master, having made one his concubine, finds "no delight in her," he must set her free, just as, according to Exod. 21:11, the Hebrew concubine became entitled to her freedom if her master and husband neglected his marital duties.[1]

The condition of slaves among the Hebrews, as has already been observed, seems generally to have been very tolerable. Yet, there were doubtless exceptions, else the laws in Exodus,[2] prescribing penalties for killing or injuring them, would not have been adopted. The Deuteronomic Code undertakes entirely to prevent such abuses. To this end it requires the admission of slaves to the most sacred privilege of the family, namely, participation in the annual feasts at the central sanctuary. It is taken for granted that such treatment will make those whose lot is service content and faithful. At any rate, it is the only means prescribed, for this code omits any reference to damages for injuries received and substitutes for them a single article forbidding the return by a third party of a bondman who has fled from his master,[3] the idea evidently being that the slave would

[1] Note the way in which the law respecting Hebrew slaves is adapted to the general requirement of the centralization of worship. In Exodus the slave who elected to remain with his master was taken to the nearest sanctuary to have his ear pierced. It would have been too much to require that this ceremony be transferred to the temple at Jerusalem; hence permission is given for its performance at the door of the master's house (Deut. 15:17).

[2] Exod. 21:20 f., 26 f. [3] Deut. 23:15.

not have run away if he had been properly treated, and that the master deserves the loss he has sustained for his inhumanity.

The social ethics of the Deuteronomic Code, also, manifests a fervent good-will, especially toward the unfortunate.

The brief law in Exod. 21:12–14 with reference to homicide is here greatly expanded, to the end that the innocent manslayer may be protected from the thoughtless resentment of the relatives of his victim, but the wilful murderer publicly condemned and executed. First, it was necessary, on account of the abolition of the local sanctuaries, where manslayers had previously found refuge,[1] and the injustice of substituting for them a single central asylum, to set apart a number of cities conveniently located for this purpose. The number first given is three,[2] but, in harmony with the fiction that the law originated with Moses, he is represented as making provision for the appointment of three more, "that innocent blood be not shed," when the whole of the Promised Land shall have been conquered.[3] The second important development in this law provides that the judges in a given case shall be the elders of the city to which the accused belongs. It is interesting, also, to note the pains taken to illustrate the possibility of accidents and stimulate sympathy for the innocent instrument of such a misfortune.

An increased respect for human life is shown, especially in the law respecting murder by an unknown hand.[4] In such a case the elders of the city nearest

[1] Exod. 21:14.

[2] Deut. 19:2.

[3] Deut. 19:8 f.

[4] Deut. 21:1–3, 5–9.

the scene of the crime are required to disavow it, and perform a ceremony setting forth the innocence of the community.[1] So, also, in that which requires the owner of a house to provide the flat roof with a battlement, lest anyone fall from it and thus bring blood upon the house.[2]

In this connection mention should be made of two or three other laws affecting the person. The first is of great importance, since it abolishes the ancient rule that the family or community must suffer with the guilty individual, and clearly ordains that "fathers shall not be put to death for children, neither shall children be put to death for fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin";[3] a law to which Jeremiah and Ezekiel give the express sanction of their great authority. The second of these laws forbids cruelty even toward criminals. The limit of corporal punishment is fixed at "forty stripes," the reason—and one worthy of the most humane and enlightened of modern penologists—being, "lest, if he (the judge) should punish him with many more stripes than these, thy brother be degraded in thine eyes."[4] The same reason might have been given for the law of Deut. 21:22 f. At any rate, when one recalls the practice of exposing malefactors after death on the gibbet, as illustrated in the horrible story of Rizpah and her sons,[5] one

[1] The Code of Hammurabi (§ 23) ordains that, when a robbery has been committed by an unknown person, "the man who has been despoiled shall recount before God what he has lost, and the city and governor in whose land and district the robbery took place shall render back to him whatever of his was lost."

[2] Deut. 22:8.

[3] Deut. 24:16.

[4] Deut. 25:3.

[5] II Sam. 21:8 ff.

appreciates the ethical significance of the command, "If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him the same day." Finally it is forbidden[1] to kidnap an Israelite and hold or sell him as a slave. This seems a narrower form of Exod. 21:16; but it is probable that in this passage "a man" means an Israelite —which is actually the reading of the Greek Version— and that therefore the later is merely a repetition of the earlier statute.

The Deuteronomic Code lays proper stress on the requirements of common honesty. Thus, when a man has made a vow, it insists that he shall pay it, lest he be found lying to Yahweh.[2] The tricks in business still prevalent in the Orient, such as false weights and measures, are prohibited under penalty of divine retribution.[3] Finally, it demands that the ancient landmarks fixing the limits of adjoining estates be held sacred and inviolate.[4]

In Exod. 18:13 ff. the Ephraimite narrator reports that Moses, at the suggestion of his father-in-law, appointed a corps of judges to hear causes of ordinary occurrence, reserving to himself the decision in those of greater importance. At the end of his code he takes occasion to warn those whom it concerns not to use the forms of law to defeat the ends of justice.[5] The new code, ignoring the previous provision, directs the appointment of judges for the various places through the tribes,[6] and gives instruction concerning the adminis-

[1] Deut. 24:7. [3] Deut. 25:13–16. [5] Exod. 21:1–3, 6–9.
[2] Deut. 23:21–23. [4] Deut. 19:14. [6] Deut. 16:18.

tration of justice. There must be at least two witnesses against the accused to justify conviction.[1] A false witness is to be punished as the accused would have been, had the charge proved true.[2] Those cases that are beyond the local authorities are to be carried to the priests at the central sanctuary or the ruling judge, whose decision shall be final.[3] The judges are exhorted not to wrest justice by favoring any person or class of persons, or by selling their decisions for money,[4] and to be especially careful not to discriminate against the sojourner, the orphan, or the widow.[5]

The Deuteronomic far surpasses the Ephraimite Code in its attention to the dependent classes. A notable illustration of this statement is found in the section concerning laborers,[6] where the employer is not only forbidden to oppress a hired servant, whether native or foreign, but required to pay him every night for the work of the preceding day, because he is poor and dependent on his wages.

The regulations concerning loans testify to the deepest sympathy with the debtor. The Hebrews did not then borrow from one another for purposes of trade, but to meet pressing necessities. A loan therefore was a charitable, and not a commercial, transaction. This is the reason why, in Exod. 22:25, it was forbidden to the Hebrew to act the usurer with his neighbor. The

[1] Deut. 17:6; 19:15.

[2] Deut. 19:15–21. In vs. 17 of this passage the words "before Yahweh, before the priests, and" are an interpolation. Note also that the Code of Hammurabi (§§ 1–4) prescribes the same penalty for giving false testimony.

[3] Deut. 17:8–13.

[4] Deut. 16:19.

[5] Deut. 24:17.

[6] Deut. 24:14 f.

prohibition is repeated in Deut. 23:19, and extended to victuals, or anything else on which others took discount. Moreover, the Hebrews were not allowed to embarrass one another in the matter of security. The lender might not enter the borrower's house to obtain a pledge,[1] or keep the poor man's garment from him over night;[2] or take a mill, or any part of it,[3] or a widow's garment,[4] in pawn. Finally, Deuteronomy applies the principle of release to debts as well as slaves, and provides[5] that every seven years "every creditor shall release that which he hath lent to his neighbor; he shall not exact it of his neighbor and his brother." At the same time he appeals to those who have means not to be moved by the prospect of losing their money, as the year of release draws near, to refuse help to those who are destitute. "Thou shalt not," he pleads, "harden thy heart, or shut thy hand from thy poor brother, but thou shalt surely open thy hand to him, and shalt surely lend to him enough for his need."

The lot of the poor is further ameliorated by a number of purely charitable provisions. One of these is that which permits the wayfarer in passing to pluck grain or grapes from a field or vineyard to satisfy his hunger.[6] A second requires that a sheaf left in the field, and the gleanings of the orchard and the vineyard, be given to "the sojourner, the orphan, and the widow."[7] Finally, the same classes, with the Levites, may share in the sacrificial feasts at the sanctuary,[8] and the tithe of the third year must be laid up in

[1] Deut. 24:10 f.
[2] Deut. 24:12 f.
[3] Deut. 24:6.
[4] Deut. 24:17.
[5] Deut. 15:1 f.
[6] Deut. 23:24.
[7] Deut. 24:19–22.
[8] Deut. 16:11, 14.

convenient places and distributed to them, that they may "eat and be satisfied."[1]

This abundant good-will does not exhaust itself upon the poor and destitute. It seeks out the young husband and bids him remain at home for a year after marriage to "cheer his wife whom he hath taken."[2] It concerns itself with cattle that have gone astray or fallen in the way, and anything else with the loss of which a neighbor is threatened,[3] even with the ox toiling on the threshing-floor[4] and the bird brooding over its young,[5] asking no reward but the pleasure of being kind and helpful.

The foreigner seems not to have been treated as generously by the Deuteronomist as might have been expected. In the first place, it must be observed that this writer makes a distinction between persons, whether Hebrews from other tribes or members of other races, who live in a given Hebrew community, and utter strangers to his race and that community. The former are called sojourners, and, as has been noted, although they are hardly recognized as the equals of native Hebrews, are treated with the utmost consideration. The latter are called "foreigners," and are expressly denied certain rights granted to Hebrews. Thus, the foreigner cannot claim relief from discount on anything borrowed,[6] or take advantage of the year of release to rid himself of burdensome debts,[7] or aspire to rule over the Chosen People.[8]

[1] Deut. 14:28 f.; 26:12 f.
[2] Deut. 24:5.
[3] Deut. 22:1–4.
[4] Deut. 25:4.
[5] Deut. 22:6 f.
[6] Deut. 23:20.
[7] Deut. 15:3.
[8] Deut. 17:15.

Thus far the foreigner has been an individual alien temporarily resident in a Hebrew community, and the statutes cited have indicated no positive hostility to such persons. There is little in the code proper, in its original form, of a different character. The most important passage is 20:10–14, where it is ordained that, when the Hebrews are about to attack a city, they shall "proclaim peace," that is, offer to spare the inhabitants if they will submit to "become tributary"; and that, even if the offer is rejected, when the city is finally taken the women and the children shall be preserved alive. This law is now followed by a supplementary paragraph explaining that it applies only to cities outside Canaan, but it is doubtful if such was its original intent. Still, in 19:1 Moses alludes to the time when Yahweh will have "cut off the nations" in whose land and in whose cities he purposed that Israel should dwell, and, in 7:2 f., which seems to have come from the same hand, they are commanded, not only not to make treaties or marriages with the Canaanites, but to destroy them thoroughly and without mercy.[1]

The law excluding Ammonites and Moabites from the assembly[2] cannot be cited as an indication of hostility to foreigners as such, for, as appears from the context, the reason for their exclusion is not because they are of foreign extraction, but because, according to Gen. 19:30 ff., they were the offspring of incest. See 23:2, where "bastard" means such a child. The admission of Edomites and Egyptians to the assembly in the third generation points in the other direction.

[1] See also Deut. 7:16, 24; 9:4a.

[2] Deut. 23:3.

The attitude of the Deuteronomist toward foreigners is, at first sight, disappointing, but it is perfectly explicable. When he wrote Judah had long been subject to Assyria, and Manasseh had made it his policy to patronize foreign cults. He had even "built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of Yahweh."[1] Thus, the religion of Yahweh was threatened with extinction, and the author of this book could see no salvation for it and his people except in the total suppression of alien power and influence.[2]

2. THE THIRD DECALOGUE

Thus far there have been only passing references to the decalogue found in Exod., chap. 20, and in a somewhat different version in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy. It is, of course, impossible to regard these ten commandments as, in any strict sense of the term, Mosaic. It has been shown that each of the two oldest documents underlying the Pentateuch, designated as the Judean, or Yahwistic, and the Ephraimite, or Elohistic, had a decalogue. If, therefore, there is a Mosaic decalogue, it cannot be the one heretofore so distinguished, but that of Exod., chap. 34 (J), of which the Ephraimite, now incorporated in the so-called Book of the Covenant, was a later modification.

The actual age and authorship of the decalogue of Exod., chap. 20, and Deut., chap. 5, is a question on which there is difference of opinion, some attributing it to a late writer of the Ephraimite school, and others to a Deuteronomic author. The former of these views seems the more defensible. In the first place, this

[1] II Kings 21:5. [2] II Kings 17:2 ff.

decalogue cannot have belonged to the original of the Book of Deuteronomy, for that work was evidently a revised edition of the Ephraimite legislation, and, as can be shown, when it was written the Ephraimite decalogue still preceded the Book of the Covenant, in other words, was recognized as the decalogue given to Moses at Sinai. On the other hand, it can hardly be attributed to a second Deuteronomist, since, in that case, it would have had one form in both Exodus and Deuteronomy, or the form in which it appeared in the latter book would have shown marks of its originality; whereas, the form actually found in Deuteronomy differs from that in Exodus, and, when they are compared, the latter appears the more original. It is probable, therefore, that this third decalogue was substituted for the second in the compilation made from the Judean and Ephraim narratives (JE) about 650 B.C., and that it was copied thence, with modifications, by the author or authors who revised and enlarged Deuteronomy. This, therefore, is the proper place to discuss its significance in the history of Hebrew ethics.

The difference between the first two decalogues and the third is striking and important. The earlier ones, as has been shown, consisted entirely of commands and prohibitions of a purely religious character. The last, on the other hand, has only four such, the other six having to do with ethical relations. This fact, when one gives it thought, is not surprising. It has more than once been noted that the Hebrews, when first they became a people, were ethically undeveloped, but that, as the generations succeeded one another, and especially in the prophetic period, they made conspicuous progress.

It was therefore natural that in time they should come to realize that the fathers had given too great prominence to the outward forms of religion and that their decalogues did not represent the will of the ethical Being whom they were worshiping. Jeremiah was very confident on the subject. His declaration with reference to it[1] is classic. He introduces it with the ironical exhortation, "Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat flesh." Then, in the name of Yahweh, he hurls at his auditors the abrupt and startling statement, "I did not speak to your fathers, or command them, in the day that I brought them forth from the land of Egypt, concerning a burnt offering and sacrifice; but this thing I commanded them, saying: Hearken to my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you." This is the conviction which, when it had taken hold of the leading spirits among the Jews toward the end of the seventh century before the Christian era, bore fruit in a new decalogue in which the ethical requirements of their religion found fitting representation, and to which was finally given the place of honor in the history of Hebrew legislation.

The significance of this decalogue, then, is not in its Mosaic origin, for either of the others has a better claim to such a distinction. Nor is it so much in any novelty of its commandments, for they are all but one found in the earlier legislation, and half of them had been put into writing by the Babylonians long before there was a Hebrew people. The tenth commandment

[1] Jer. 7:21 ff.

is not entirely new, since it simply shifts the prohibition from overt acts to the disposition, from which, as Baentsch puts it, "as from a root, most sins by men against one another proceed." No; the significance of this decalogue is not in any such peculiarity, but in the fact that it registered the triumph of the prophets and their ideas over formalism and established the fundamental importance of morality in the Hebrew religion, for in it man's duties to man are put upon the same level with his obligations to his Maker.

The original form and content of this decalogue accorded with its fundamental character. Note the qualifier, "original." It means that these commandments are not now in the form that they must have had when they were first brought together; that, as can easily be shown, some of them have been greatly expanded. It is probable that they all then had the brief, concise form that some of them have preserved, and read about as follows:

1. Thou shalt have no other gods besides me.
2. Thou shalt not make thyself a graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of Yahweh thy God in vain.
4. Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

It will be observed that the number of the commandments, though restricted, as in the case of the other two decalogues, is adequate. It may originally have been suggested by the sum of the fingers of the two hands, and intended to symbolize completeness. In any case the commandments themselves must be regarded as symbolical or representative. Thus, the last six, with which alone the present discussion is concerned, cover the entire field of the relations of men to one another; the fifth laying the foundation for human government; the sixth to the ninth, protecting respectively the person, the home, property, and reputation; and the tenth strengthening the four preceding by rearing, as it were, an outwork against the violation of human rights. The symbolical character of this decalogue fitted it for the place it occupies before the Ephraimite Code, which is, in a sense, an expansion of its content. From the historical standpoint, however, one must remember, the decalogue really completed the development that produced the Book of the Covenant.

3. THE SECONDARY ELEMENT IN DEUTERONOMY AND THE DEUTERONOMIC ADDITIONS TO THE EARLIER NARRATIVES

The date given for the original of Deuteronomy was 650 B.C. In 621, when it was discovered in the temple, it had been revised and enlarged, and the most important addition that had been made was the third decalogue, which had meanwhile been inserted into the compilation made from the Judean and Ephraimite narratives, as already described, and was borrowed thence by the reviser. At the same time it was somewhat modified.

The changes made, though not very important, deserve passing attention. In the fourth and fifth commandments the reviser inserts the clause, "as Yahweh thy God commanded thee," to remind the reader that he was copying. In the fifth he adds, among other things, as a reason for observing the Sabbath, "that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou," a purpose perfectly in line with the humane tendency observed in the Deuteronomic legislation.[1] Finally, in the last commandment, he transposes "house" and "wife," so that "house," which, in Exod., chap. 20, is a general term including the items that follow, becomes a designation for a mere dwelling, while the primacy of a man's wife among his possessions is made more explicit.

There is a considerable secondary element in Deuteronomy outside the Decalogue and the narrative that forms its setting, and there are a number of passages having a bearing on the ethical history of the Hebrews. It is by no means probable that all of these passages are from the same hand, but they have so much in common that any difference in authorship may, for the time being, be ignored.

There is one passage of a general character, which first invites attention. It is supplementary to the law concerning the king. This law originally required only that the future ruler refrain from "multiplying" horses, women, or gold and silver.[2] A later hand inserted the requirement that he provide himself with a private copy of the law then under revision and "read therein all the days of his life."[3] In other words, the author of this

[1] Deut. 16:11, 14, etc.

[2] Deut. 17:14–17.

[3] Deut. 17:18 f.

supplementary clause demanded for the revised code the recognition as the law of the land which it received from Josiah and his people on its promulgation in 621 B.C.

The sanction thus given by the later writer to the work of his predecessor forbids one to expect any serious divergence between them. In point of fact, the difference, where there is any, is mainly a matter of emphasis or development. Thus, they agree in explaining the goodness of Yahweh to Israel as a display of unmerited grace, prompted by his regard for the fathers,[1] but the ethical value of the doctrine as taught by them is not the same, or nearly the same, in both cases. The elder writer puts his teaching most succinctly in 9:5, where he makes Moses say, "Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thy heart, dost thou go in to possess their (the Canaanites') land; but for the wickedness of these nations Yahweh thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may establish the word which Yahweh swore to thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Here, the unworthiness of Israel is clearly taught, and boasting on their part "excluded"; but the emphasis is placed upon the positive offenses of the Canaanites, in view of which their expulsion becomes a notable illustration of the moral character of the divine government. Compare, now, vss. 6 ff., where the reviser repeats the denial of merit just made, but, instead of dismissing the matter in these negative and general terms, adds, first a positive indictment, and then a bill of particulars in which he recalls the various occasions during the Exodus when

[1] Deut. 7:12b, 7–8a.

they offended their God and Savior and at the end of which he makes the scathing declaration, "Ye have been rebellious against Yahweh from the day that I knew you." Finally he reminds them that they would more than once have been destroyed, in spite of the covenant with the fathers, if he had not personally interceded for them.[1] It is clear, especially when one notes that one of the motives to which Moses says he appealed was Yahweh's jealousy for his reputation,[2] that here, as in some passages from an earlier reviser (Rje), the grace of Yahweh is magnified at the expense of his moral character.[3]

The tendency to extravagance brought to light by the above comparison has other manifestations; for example, in the relative prominence of the motives to which the later writer appeals. The author of the original work made his first appeal to gratitude. There is such an appeal in 8:2–6, which is immediately followed by one to the universal desire of well-being; and in this instance no alternative is suggested. When, as in chap. 28, he is obliged to face the possibility, if not the probability, that his exhortations will be disregarded, he knows how to picture the consequences of incorrigibility, but even there he does not dwell on the "terrors of the Lord" or present the one alternative without again repeating the other.[4] The reviser, on the other hand, naturally appeals to fear. It is he who recalls that, when Yahweh spoke to his people at Horeb, "the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven," that they might "learn to fear" their God and transmit

[1] Deut. 9:19; 10:10 f.

[2] Deut. 9:28.

[3] See pp. 152 f.

[4] Deut. 28:1–25a, 43–45.

the feeling to their children,[1] and how deep was the impression made upon the terrified beholders.[2] He also brings to remembrance the awful miracles by which Yahweh rid himself of his enemies during the Exodus, the plagues of Egypt, the overthrow of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea, and the disappearance of Dathan and Abiram and their followers in the bowels of the earth.[3] It is not strange, therefore, to find that he, or someone else who was like-minded, has added a warning at the end of chap. 8,[4] greatly expanded the list of curses in chap. 28, and attached to the formal renewal of the covenant with Yahweh in chap. 29 still another warning in the form of a portrayal of the Promised Land smitten by a destruction as complete as that which overtook Sodom and Gomorrah.[5] In chap. 28, which from vs. 25b onward, except vss. 43–45, is almost entirely secondary, this writer displays an almost fiendish ingenuity in inventing horrors with which to frighten his readers into obedience to the preceding "statutes and ordinances." The result is that he has overshot his mark, the thoughtful reader being obliged either to reject his message or believe that the God of the Hebrews, so far from being just, is cruel and vindictive.

There is one passage in which the tendency to extravagance shows itself in specific legislation. In 24:5, it will be remembered, the original law provided that a man who had taken a wife should "not go out in the host" or "be charged with any business," but "be at home one year." In chap. 20 the reviser intro-

[1] Deut. 4:10 f. [3] Deut. 11:2–7. [5] Vss. 10 ff.
[2] Deut. 5:22–27. [4] Vss. 19 f.

duces an extension of the principle involved so broad that it becomes impracticable, for he would exempt from military service, just before a battle, not only the newly married, but everyone that "hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her"; or "built a new house, and hath not dedicated it"; or "planted a vineyard, and hath not used the fruit thereof"; and, finally, anyone that is "fearful and fainthearted."[1] There is only one recorded instance of the application of this law, namely, by Judas Maccabaeus on the eve of the battle of Emmaus.[2] The result was what might have been expected. According to II Macc. 8:13, "they that were cowardly and they that had no faith in the justice of God fled and betook themselves from the place," leaving the Jewish army so reduced in numbers that no one but Judas would have thought of risking a battle.

It remains to notice the attitude of the later writer or writers in Deuteronomy toward the unfortunate and aliens. In 10:18 f. Moses declares that Yahweh defends the orphan and the widow; also that he loves the sojourner, and for this reason, and because they themselves were once sojourners in Egypt, his people must be kind and helpful to this class of persons. The consideration shown sojourners is in strong contrast with the lack of sympathy or positive hostility displayed by the reviser or supplementer toward those who are called foreigners. An instance of distinct discrimination is found in 14:21a, where the Hebrew is instructed that he may dispose of the flesh of an animal that dies of itself to the sojourner or the foreigner,

[1] Vss. 2–9. [2] I Macc. 3:56.

but may take pay for it only from the latter. The indications of positive hostility to foreigners are more numerous. Thus, in 2:34 and 3:6 the author reports with evident satisfaction the destruction of the Amorites east of the Jordan, together with "the women and the little ones"; and, in 20:15–18 he directs that the peoples of Canaan be not treated as humanely as other foreigners, but that, when their cities are attacked, there be left alive "nothing that breatheth." To the secondary stratum of the book belong also, 23:4–6 and 25:17–19, where the disposition to keep alive the hatred for foreigners is only too much in evidence.

When the original of Deuteronomy was under discussion there was frequent occasion to notice ethical progress made since the Ephraimite Code was written. It was natural to expect that the additions made to Deuteronomy by later writers of the same school would be of the same relative character. It must, however, be confessed that such is not the case; that the passages just examined, so far from indicating further development in the right direction, betray, at least in the author or authors, a degree of ethical retrogression. This state of things must have had its cause or causes. One of them, if there were several, may have been the doctrine of election, to which the second Deuteronomist gives special prominence. Thus, in 26:16–19 he represents Moses as promising that Yahweh will not only make Israel his peculiar people, but exalt them "high above all (the other) nations that he hath made, for praise, and for fame, and for glory."[1] It was natural that such a doctrine should in time make the Hebrews

[1] See also Exod. 19:5 f.

forget the ethical requirements of their religion and assume an attitude of contempt or cruelty, according to circumstances, toward other peoples. It is doubtful, however, whether the passages in question reflect a widespread popular opinion or sentiment. There seems to be a more plausible explanation of their tone and content. The Deuteronomic Code was originally the result of an attempt to adjust a body of older laws to the requirements of a new set of conditions, and the person or persons who prepared it were practical in their views and methods. The additions to this Code were evidently made by a man or men of a different stamp. They, if there were more than one, appear to have been men, learned in their way, but without experience of actual life and every-day affairs. When such persons write history they are apt to mingle fact and fiction, and, when they frame legislation, to betray strange notions of justice. The author of Deut. 2:26 ff. seems to have been one of these scribes. If so, it is easy to picture him transforming the defeat of Sihon at Jahaz and the occupation of his country by the Hebrews, as described in Num. 21:21–24, into a campaign of havoc, and slaughter, and pillage in which a nation perished; also supplying a corresponding account of the conquest of Bashan, of which there is no trace in the earlier literature.[1] The recognition of the academic character of the secondary element in Deuteronomy explains all the instances of extravagance cited, but it is especially helpful in studying the twenty-eighth chapter. This

[1] Deut. 3:1–7. See Num. 22:2 and Josh. 24:8, where it should have been mentioned. The brief account in Num. 21:33–35 is supposed to have been derived from Deuteronomy.

long discourse, as has already been observed, bristles with terrors, the effect of which, in their extravagance, is to benumb or offend the reader's ethical judgment. If, however, they are largely the literary fantasies of a Jewish scribe, this fact should be taken into account, and any such unfortunate experience avoided.

When Deuteronomy was added to the composite work that preceded it, not only it but the work into which it was incorporated was revised by the new compiler from the later Deuteronomic standpoint. Some of these additions are of a harmonistic character. The secondary account of the conquest of Bashan in Num. 21:33–35 has already been cited. There are three such passages in Exodus, namely, 22:25, forbidding discount, like Deut. 23:19, and 22:22 and 23:9, which have their parallel in Deut. 24:17 f. There is only one that marks an advance beyond the Deuteronomic Code, Exod. 23:4 f., where Deut. 22:1–4 is so modified as to require that a stray animal be returned, or a fallen one assisted, even when the owner is known to be a personal enemy. The change here made, however, means, not that the Hebrews, when it was made, had learned to hate their enemies less, but that they had come to love animals more and would not permit them to suffer to spite the owners.

There are two passages in which there is an emphasis on the idea of retribution, such as one would expect of a Deuteronomic writer. These are: Exod. 34:7b, where the words from "and that will by no means," or "altogether," "acquit," etc., seem to be an accretion; and II Sam. 12:10–12, where Nathan's arraignment and David's confession are separated by a prediction

of Absalom's rebellion as a penalty for the wrongs the king had committed against Uriah.

The rest of the passages that deserve notice in this connection, almost all of them, have to do with the relations of the Hebrews with foreigners. The first two, Exod. 23:31b–33 and 34:12 f., 15 f., reproduce the prohibition of treaties or marriages with the Canaanites and the injunction to destroy the native population without mercy, the originals of which are found in Deut. 7:2 f. Here belong considerable portions of the Book of Joshua. There is some difference of opinion concerning their extent, but there can be little doubt that they include 10:28–43, 11:10–23, and the whole of chap. 12. These passages must be read with the same reserve and allowance as the later parts of Deuteronomy, for they exemplify the same tendency to extravagance that was there discovered. This time, however, the object of the author is not so much to enforce the doctrine of retribution as to increase the renown of Joshua. Thus, in 10:28 ff. he ascribes to Joshua the conquest of the whole of southern Palestine, whereas the older authorities give him credit only for the defeat of the coalition against Gibeon and the execution of the five kings who belonged to it,[1] the Judean narrative, fragments of which are preserved in the first chapter of Judges, saying distinctly that southern Palestine, so far as it was conquered, was conquered and occupied by the tribes of Judah and Simeon, and that it was Caleb who actually took Hebron, and his son-in-law who captured Debir.[2] This, however, is not so objectionable

[1] Josh. 10:5 in part; vs. 10 in part; vss. 16–18, 24, 26.

[2] Judg. 1:3, 5 f., 19, 21 (where "Judah" should be substituted for "Benjamin"), 20, the three names from vs. 10, 11–15, 17.

as the statement, which occurs in some form no fewer than eleven times in chapters 10 and 11, that, as often as Joshua took a city, he put to death the entire population, and, finally, that Yahweh instigated the Canaanites "to come against Israel in battle, for the purpose of destroying them."[1]

It is a relief not to be obliged to believe the Hebrew leader to have been such a monster; also to be able to acquit David of similar atrocities, for, according to the critics, II Sam. 8:2, where the king is said to put to death two-thirds of his Moabite prisoners, and vs. 4, where he is reported to have hocked all but a hundred of the horses taken from the king of Zobah, are Deuteronomic interpolations. The same is true of I Kings 2:5 ff., where David is represented as laying upon Solomon the dying injunction not to let the hoary heads of Joab and Shimei "go down in peace to Sheol," as if the writer were trying to save the credit of the son at the expense of the father's honor.

[1] Josh. 11:20; also Exod. 10:1b.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PROPHECIES OF ZEPHANIAH, HABAKKUK, AND NAHUM

It seemed necessary to follow the Deuteronomic line of development nearly to the close of the seventh century. Otherwise it would have been difficult to appreciate its importance to the study of Hebrew ethics. Meanwhile some of the prophets had to be neglected. Three of these, because they all belonged to the latter part of the century and naturally had more or less in common, as well as because they were among the minor contributors to the prophetical literature, may be grouped together in this chapter.

1. ZEPHANIAH

The Book of Zephaniah is dated in the reign of Josiah, but, since the king is not mentioned, except in the title, while the Scythian invasion seems to be foreshadowed, it is probable that the prophecies it contains were uttered or written before Josiah became of age, perhaps about 628 B.C. They are directed, first, against Jerusalem, or its ruling classes, but also against Philistia, Ethiopia, and Assyria.

The prophet sees and hears a great crisis approaching. The great day of Yahweh, he says, "is near and hasteth greatly."[1] There is to be a general and inevitable catastrophe. All alike must suffer. "Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the

[1] Zeph. 1:14.

day of Yahweh's wrath; but the whole earth (not "land") will be devoured by the fire of his jealousy; for he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the earth."[1] He does not make clear just what the other nations have done to deserve the punishment threatened, but with reference to his own people he is more specific. It is the old story, a replica, as far as it goes, of the indictment brought against Israel by Amos and Hosea, and applied to Judah by Isaiah and Micah. The first count is unfaithfulness to Yahweh, shown, not only in deserting him for other deities, but in following the syncretic tendency of the day and paying a divided allegiance to him and the gods of the neighboring nations.[2] It was natural that those who had proved disloyal to Yahweh should be found unfaithful in their relations with their fellows. As usual, the ruling classes are the chief offenders. In Zeph. 1:8 f. the princes and the courtiers are expressly mentioned as guilty of "violence and deception." In 3:3 f. they are associated with the judicial and the religious authorities. The princes of Jerusalem, the prophet declares, are "roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; they leave nothing till the morrow. Her prophets are reckless and treacherous persons; her priests have profaned the sanctuary, they have done violence to instruction."[3] The whole spirit and conduct of these leaders is contrary to the will and character of Yahweh. He is "righteous; he doeth not injustice. Every morning, without fail bringeth he his justice to light."[4] There are some, the humble of the land, who have

[1] Zeph. 1:18.

[2] II Kings 21:1 ff., 19 ff.; 23:5 ff.

[3] Hos. 4:6.

[4] Zeph. 3:5.

wrought righteousness before Yahweh. They are encouraged to continue, not forgetting to preserve their attitude of humility toward their God, for thus only can they hope to receive protection "in the day of Yahweh's anger."[1] The prophet expects that a remnant will survive the coming visitation. Indeed, he promises that there shall remain a people chastened and weakened, who shall take refuge in the name of Yahweh, and that this "remnant of Israel shall not do injustice or speak lies."[2]

The attitude of Zephaniah toward foreigners is much like that of the second Deuteronomist, and for the same reasons. Thus, he condemns, not only the foreign custom of leaping over the threshold, but also the foreign garments in which those who surrounded the king clothed themselves. He foresees the devastation of Philistia,[3] the punishment of Ethiopia, and the overthrow and destruction of Assyria.[4]

2. HABAKKUK

The Book of Habakkuk—or the first two chapters of it—as appears when 1:5–11 is removed from its present connection and inserted after 2:4, has for its subject the overthrow of Assyria. That great nation is here arraigned for getting other nations into its power by treachery,[5] for robbing them, even to the poorest,[6] for treating them with violence and cruelty,[7] and for

[1] Zeph. 2:3. [3] Zeph. 2:4 f., 7a. [5] Hab. 1:13.

[2] Zeph. 3:13. [4] Zeph. 2:12–14. [6] Hab. 2:6, 9.

[7] Hab. 1:2 ff., 13 ff.; 2:15. In 1:14 it is clear that "makest" is an error for "maketh." See vss. 15 ff. In 2:15 read "Woe to him that giveth his neighbor to drink from the cup of his wrath, and even maketh them drunken, that he may look upon their nakedness." See Jer. 25:15 ff.; Nah. 3:11. The reference to intoxicating drink is purely figurative.

destroying them without mercy.[1] In this case the agent that Yahweh purposes to use in punishing the guilty nation is the Chaldeans.

In this book the ethical standing of the Jews as compared with the Assyrians is clearly represented as superior; for it is probably the writer's own people who are the righteous of 1:4, and more than probable that this is the case in 2:4, where the sufferers are assured that "the just shall live by his faithfulness," that is, survive the present distress if, and because, he remains faithful to Yahweh.[2]

3. NAHUM

The last two chapters of the Book of Nahum, which alone can safely be attributed to the prophet of that name, are wholly directed against Nineveh. They must, therefore, have been written before 606 B.C., the date of its fall, and, indeed, not long before that event. In other words, Nahum, like Habakkuk, was a younger contemporary of Jeremiah.

The significance of the prophecies of Nahum, from the ethical standpoint, is not at once apparent, but, on closer study, they will be found to be in line with the results already obtained. Indeed, Nahum, like Amos, takes for granted a universal moral responsibility, and condemns the Assyrians for the same inhuman practices, bloodshed, robbery, and intrigue,[3] of which the earlier neighbors of the Hebrews were found guilty.[4] So just,

[1] Hab. 1:17; 2:12, 17.

[2] The psalm in the third chapter is generally assigned to a later date than the rest of the book.

[3] Nah. 3:1, 4.

[4] Amos 1:3 ff.

therefore, seem the penalties he pronounces against them, that he confidently expects all who hear of their execution to "clap their hands" in approval.[1]

It should be noted that in this book there is no indication of the ethical or religious condition of the Jews. It seems to be assumed that they are suffering, not through their own fault, but from the unprovoked cruelty of their heathen masters. See Habakkuk.

[1] Nah. 3:19.

CHAPTER XV

JEREMIAH AND HIS TIMES

Jeremiah began his prophetic activity in the thirteenth year of Josiah (626 B.C.), which was some time after the original of Deuteronomy was written, but five years before the book was made public. He was naturally acquainted with this work, and influenced by it. This influence, however, is more apparent in his language[1] than in his ideas; for he was too great a man to be limited in his thinking by any code or movement of the period in which he lived.

Jeremiah was a unique and solitary character. He realized this from the start. In the first of his prophecies, where he tells the story of his call, he represents Yahweh as concluding the revelation then made with these personal words: "Do thou, therefore, gird thy loins, and arise and speak to them all that I command thee. Be not dismayed on account of them, lest I dismay thee before them. As for me, lo, I have this day made thee a fortified city, and an iron pillar, and bronze walls to the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests, and the people of the land; and they shall war against thee, but they shall not overpower thee, for I am with thee, saith Yahweh, to rescue thee."[2]

While he was yet at Anathoth he had experience of opposition and isolation. There are no details, except

[1] Colenso was led by the similarity in language between the two books to ascribe them both to Jeremiah. See *The Pentateuch*, III, 618; VII, 225 ff.; App., 85 ff.

[2] Jer. 1:17 ff.

the statement that his neighbors forbade him on pain of death to prophesy further in the name of Yahweh.[1] When he went to Jerusalem he very soon incurred the enmity of both the priests and the prophets, whom he describes as plotting against him, saying, "Come and let us devise devices against Jeremiah."[2] The reason they gave for their hostility was, "for instruction shall not be wanting to the priest, or counsel to the wise, or a message to the prophet"; which, being interpreted, means that he had questioned their authority. They did not then propose very severe measures against him, only to "smite him with the tongue," and "not give heed to any of his words." They did not, however, long pursue this mild course. "In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim," when he predicted the destruction of the temple, "they laid hold on him," and he was rescued from death only by the firmness of the princes and the finesse of his friend Ahikam.[3] He now began to feel himself so much "alone" that he nearly lost his faith in Yahweh, and had to be rebuked for his weakness and strengthened by a repetition of the promise he had received at the beginning of his ministry.[4] When Nebuchadrezzar appeared in Palestine, the prophet became increasingly unpopular, until he heard his former friends urging one another to entrap him that they might denounce him to the authorities and wreak vengeance on him.[5] Finally, as he was leaving the city to go to Anathoth, he was arrested as a deserter and imprisoned by the same princes who had previously defended him,[6] and he remained a prisoner, alternately

[1] Jer. 11:21. [3] Jer. 26:1 ff. [5] Jer. 20:10 ff.
[2] Jer. 18:18. [4] Jer. 15:15 ff. [6] Jer. 37:11 ff.

abused and consulted, until the city fell into the hands of the Chaldeans.[1]

The conduct of Jeremiah under the conditions to which he was subjected is one of the noblest examples of moral heroism in the history of mankind. It is almost impossible to realize the number and power of the forces arrayed against him. At the outset his incessant warfare upon idolatry naturally offended those who worshiped other gods than Yahweh. The emphasis he placed upon ethics stirred to the most determined opposition, on one side, the priests, and, on the other, the immoral rabble. When he foretold, as he felt he must, the capture of Jerusalem, the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty, and the devastation of the country, he unmasked the false prophets, touched the pride of the ruling classes, and provoked a storm of patriotic frenzy. Now, it is easy to see that a man as sensitive as Jeremiah would suffer sorely under so severe and so universal condemnation, but even more acutely because his people had incurred the divine displeasure and he himself must not only act as the mouthpiece of Yahweh, but witness the distressful fulfilment of his own predictions. It is not strange that, facing such a situation, he cursed the day he was born, and demanded, "Wherefore should I have come forth out of the womb, to see labor and sorrow, I whose days have been spent in shame?"[2] Yet he could not but hear the fateful message, and, when he had heard, he could not withhold it. "If," he explains, "I should say, I will not make mention of him, or speak again in his name, there would be in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up

[1] Jer. 38:1 ff. [2] Jer. 20:14 ff.

in my bones, and I should weary of restraining myself, and should not be able to endure it."[1] Therefore, however fiercely he might be beset by enemies, honest or corrupt, and however deeply he might be pained by his own message, he never, as far as appears, held his peace for any length of time, or thought of refusing to declare to those to whom he was commissioned "the whole counsel of God."

The isolation of Jeremiah had a notable effect upon him and his teaching. In the first place, it threw him back upon himself to a greater extent than was the case with any of the other prophets, and forced him to seek in himself, and God as revealed to his consciousness, the approval and appreciation that were denied him by those for whom he lived and labored. The result was an ethical and religious experience of a singularly intimate and personal character, which now and then shows itself in his prophecies. The central thought in Jeremiah's discourses is that God is just. It was because he believed this with all his heart, and saw that his people deserved the severest punishment, that he predicted as confidently as he did their dispersion. He never had any doubt on this subject; but, when he attempted to apply the same doctrine in his own personal affairs, he was sometimes tempted to question the divine justice, and he was too honest to conceal his weakness. One of the passages in which he opens his heart to Yahweh and the reader is Jer. 12:1 ff. It is a confession made when he found that his neighbors in Anathoth were seeking his life. He was profoundly conscious of his own rectitude. "Thou,

[1] Jer. 20:9.

O Yahweh," he exclaims, "knowest me; thou seest me, and triest my heart toward thee." It seemed to him that those who plotted the death of such a man as he should be punished, and that severely. When he saw that they were not hurried away "like sheep for slaughter" he could not understand it. Still, he dared not say that Yahweh was not just. This is the way he put the matter: "Righteous art thou, O Yahweh, when I contend with thee"; that is, I know that thou must be righteous; "yet would I reason the cause with thee," cite a case for decision. "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are they all at ease that deal very treacherously?" The reply to his appeal shows that he was really telling his own experience. It is not an explanation, but a rebuke: "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" which means, If thy faith is not strong enough to support thee in thy present trials, what wilt thou do when greater ones overtake thee? In 15:15 ff. the story is repeated. "O Yahweh," he cries, "thou knowest. . . . . Wilt thou indeed be to me as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail?" This time, after a deserved rebuke, he receives the assurance, "I am with thee, to save and deliver thee." There was a third struggle, of which there is a record in Jer. 20:7 ff. This passage, however, according to Cornill, should be rearranged, so that vss. 14–18 will precede vss. 7–12. Thus read, it describes the prophet's experience when he was put into the stocks by Pashur. It was then that he cursed the day he was born, as already narrated. Then he appealed to Yahweh, "O Yahweh, thou hast beguiled

me, and I have been beguiled. Thou hast laid hold of me and hast prevailed. I am become a laughing-stock all the day; every one mocketh me." Finally he overcomes his doubts and fears and exclaims, "But Yahweh is with me as a terrible warrior: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and not prevail; they shall be greatly ashamed, because they have not succeeded, with an everlasting dishonor that shall never be forgotten." Thus he preserved to the end a faith in God's justice in spite of the persecution to which he was subjected.

The personal experience of Jeremiah was calculated to make him an individualist in ethics as in religion. This was not the prevalent attitude. The Hebrews, like other ancient peoples, thought of themselves collectively. The individual was lost in the family, the tribe, and the nation. If, therefore, he acted worthily, the whole of which he was a part shared the credit of his conduct, and, on the other hand, if he offended, the same body shared his accountability. There had been dissent from this requirement before Jeremiah. It had crystallized into the law found in Deut. 24:16 according to which "the fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin." Jeremiah insisted that this was the law of the divine government. He repudiated, therefore, the proverb that embodied the traditional error, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," and announced, "Every one shall die for his own iniquity; the man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge."[1]

[1] Jer. 31:29 f.

The prophet went beyond Deuteronomy, for he applied the principle of individualism, not only to successive generations, but to contemporaries, and that in the same connection.[1] The passage is a remarkable one. It reads, "Lo, the days come, saith Yahweh, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which covenant they brake, although I was a husband to them); but this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel in those later days, saith Yahweh: I will put my law within them, yea, in their hearts will I write it." The Hebrew reads, literally, "their heart," and the phrase is so rendered into English, but this is the Hebrew idiom for "their hearts," that is, the individual hearts of the people composing the nation. Naturally, therefore, the prophet proceeds to say, "And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, Know Yahweh; for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest of them, saith Yahweh."

The importance of this doctrine cannot be overestimated, since it enabled the Jews, when their temple was destroyed, and their people scattered, to maintain, each for himself, an ethical and religious life, wherever he might wander.

Jeremiah was a "fortress" and an "iron tower" in more than one sense. He was as conspicuous as he was invincible. His life, therefore, was a constant sermon on courage and fidelity to conviction. This

[1] Jer. 31:31–34.

being the case, he did not need in so many words to commend these virtues to his people. He did, however, have occasion to deal with various phases of domestic and social ethics. In so doing he did not fail to emphasize the relation of ethics to religion. He was thoroughly in accord with the movement that resulted in the substitution of the decalogue of Exod., chap. 20, for those of the earlier narratives. His position is clear from Jer. 6:20, where he represents Yahweh as saying, "To what purpose cometh there to me frankincense from Sheba and calamus from a far country? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, or your sacrifices pleasing to me"; because his people had rejected his instruction. In 7:8 ff. Yahweh serves notice on the immoral as well as the disloyal that they must not appear as worshipers in his sanctuary.[1] The strongest utterance in the Book of Jeremiah on this subject is 7:21 ff., where Yahweh is made to say, "Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat flesh. For I spake not to your fathers, nor did I command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning a burnt offering and a sacrifice: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Hearken to my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people, and walk ye in the way that I command you, that it may be well with you."[2]

Jeremiah found the family as an institution threatened by the prevalence of adultery. This state of things was doubtless due to the reaction under Manasseh, who "did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh after the abominations of the nations that

[1] See also Jer. 11:15. [2] See also Jer. 11:1 ff.

Yahweh cast out before the children of Israel," and under Amon, who "walked in the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshiped them."[1] When Josiah came to the throne there was at first a tendency to syncretism, against which Jeremiah protested. "Will ye . . . . commit adultery . . . . and burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods that ye have not known, and come and stand before me, in the house that is called by my name, and say, We are delivered; that ye may do all these abominations?" In another passage he says that the land is "full of adulterers."[2] Among the offenders against marital virtue in his time were some, at least, of the prophets. The nature of the offense is clear enough from 23:13 ff. In vs. 13 the prophet recalls the folly of Samaria. The prophets of that kingdom, now destroyed, "prophesied by Baal," he says, and caused the people "to stray" from Yahweh, that is, commit adultery in the figurative sense of the expression. But he adds, vs. 14, "In the prophets of Jerusalem also I have seen what is horrible, committing adultery, and walking in falsehood, and strengthening the hands of evil-doers not to turn each from his wickedness. They have all become to me as Sodom, and its inhabitants as Gomorrah." Here it is manifestly literal adultery that he has in mind, as appears from the association of the sin in question with falsehood, and especially from the reference to the cities of the Plain. See also 9:23, where the prophet, in a letter to the Jews in Babylonia, says of Ahab and Zedekiah, who were predicting their speedy restoration, that "they have

[1] II Kings 21:2, 20. [2] Jer. 23:10.

wrought folly in Israel and committed adultery with their neighbor's wives." In view of this exposé of the condition of morals among those who should have been Jeremiah's allies, it is no wonder that his efforts to reform and rescue his people ended in failure.

Jeremiah, like Hosea, uses the marital relation to illustrate the moral character of that between God and Israel. Thus, he recalls the earliest and, according to him, the happiest, period of Israel's history, making Yahweh say in Jer. 2:1 f., "I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals; how thou wentest after me in the desert, in a land that was not sown"; and, in 31:32 (according to the present text), "my covenant they brake, although I was a husband to them." See also 2:20; 3:20; 11:15; 13:27, where the unfaithfulness of Israel is vividly portrayed.

There is a passage in which is described how the prophet made use of another domestic relation to illustrate a religious lesson. It is the story of his interview with the Rechabites. He invited them to the temple and offered them wine to drink. Now, their ancestor Jonadab had forbidden them to drink wine. They therefore refused it. The prophet commended them for so doing, and took occasion to contrast their obedience with the disregard by his people of the commands of Yahweh. This incident is a favorite with the advocates of total abstinence, who find in it support for their cause. The prophet, however, who himself probably drank wine, as did most of the people in his day, had no such thought. He employed the wine simply as a test of the loyalty of the Rechabites to their

ancestor. He might have chosen either of several others, for this Jonadab, as a nomad, also forbade his descendants to build houses, sow seed, or plant vineyards. If he had done so, the result would have been the same. Yet, no one would have thought of quoting Jeremiah against the custom, for example, of building houses instead of living in tents.

There was a humane provision in the Ephraimite Code limiting the term for which a Hebrew could be held in slavery to six years.[1] When the code was recast this particular law was retained and the master exhorted to deal generously with the released bondman.[2] The law, however, had apparently not been observed. In the reign of Zedekiah, therefore, there were many Hebrews who had been held to service beyond the term specified. When Jerusalem was besieged by the Babylonians, the king, hoping to propitiate Yahweh, or prevent an internal disturbance, persuaded the people to release their slaves; but later, probably when there seemed to be a prospect of help from the Egyptians,[3] they repented of their humanity and "caused the servants and the handmaids whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them (again) into subjection for servants and handmaids."[4] This they did in violation of a solemn covenant made in the temple at Jerusalem. Jeremiah was, of course, indignant, and in the name of Yahweh announced that as a penalty for this act of perfidy the Chaldeans should return, the capital be taken and burned, and the entire kingdom of Judah be reduced to "a desolation, without an inhabitant."[5]

[1] Exod. 21:2.
[2] Deut. 15:12 ff.
[3] Jer. 37:5 ff.
[4] Jer. 34:8 ff.
[5] Jer. 34:17 ff.

When one inquires what Jeremiah taught on the subject of social ethics, one is struck with the elementary character of that teaching. Indeed, when one considers the decalogue of Exod., chap. 20, and Deut., chap. 5, and remembers that the offenses there forbidden, so far as they were social, had been forbidden among the Hebrews for centuries, one cannot but ask if there was any other reason than the one already given, the growing recognition of the relation of ethics to religion, for such a decalogue. The prophecies of Jeremiah throw some light upon this question; for it will be found that, in spite of the heroic endeavors of preceding prophets, the Jews of his time were so indifferent to one another's rights that all the forbidden offenses were of common occurrence. If one goes deeper and inquires why this was the case, a probable answer will be found in the disturbed condition of Palestine as a whole and the weakness of the Jewish government.

It was a period of decadence, and Jeremiah was trying to turn back the tide of corruption. He was very clear in his ideas concerning the requirements of the social relation. The prime demand, to his mind, was justice tempered with mercy between man and man. This is finely put in Jer. 9:23, where Yahweh says, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, or the mighty man in his might, or the rich man in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he hath understanding and knoweth me, that I am Yahweh, who do kindness, and justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these I delight, saith Yahweh."

The ideal king will naturally be one who conforms to this requirement. This is Jeremiah's description of

him: "Lo, the days are coming when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king, and deal wisely, and do justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely; and this shall be the name whereby he shall be called, Yahweh our righteousness."[1] Jeremiah would gladly have helped the four weaklings who, one after another, ascended the throne during his career, to attain some likeness to this picture. In Jer. 21:12 he urges Zedekiah to "execute prompt (literally, "in the morning") justice, and deliver him that is robbed out of the hand of the oppressor." To the last he continued to exhort the king and his subjects to the same effect, citing Josiah as an example of the result of such conduct.[2] He searched Jerusalem to find a man who did justly and sought truth,[3] but found none who pleaded the cause of the fatherless, or helped the needy to secure their rights.[4] He offered them in the name of Yahweh deliverance from the impending catastrophe, if they would "thoroughly execute justice between man and man,"[5] but they went their stubborn, reckless way unheeding.

A man's life, especially that of a poor man, was not safe in those days. Jeremiah repeatedly accuses his people of murder. What made their guilt the greater was that they felt no compunctions for their violent proceedings, probably because they shed innocent blood under the forms of law, and therefore in the name of the God they were offending. In 2:34 f. the prophet represents them as protesting their innocence when

[1] Jer. 23:5 f.
[2] Jer. 22:3, 15.
[3] Jer. 5:1.
[4] Jer. 5:28.
[5] Jer. 7:5.

caught red-handed, and in 7:10 as even claiming the protection of Yahweh in their criminal practices.[1]

In the same connection Jeremiah accuses his people of oppression, including the minor forms of violence by which the rich and powerful made the lives of those who were poorer and weaker, and, indeed, of the prophet himself, a burden to them.[2]

Those who do not respect their neighbors' persons cannot be expected to have scruples about stealing. The Jews of Jeremiah's time did not; but he did not permit them to steal unrebuked. He mentions theft first in the list of offenses of which he finds them guilty in 7:9. Later he warns those who get riches "and not by right" that they cannot hope to retain their ill-gotten gains,[3] and finally pronounces a woe upon "him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by injustice; that useth his neighbor's service without wages, and giveth him not his hire; that saith, I will build me a wide house and spacious chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and it is ceiled with cedar and painted with vermilion."[4]

The English Version makes the impression that Jeremiah followed robbery to its source in illegitimate desire. The original does not warrant such a rendering. The word rendered "covetousness" in Jer. 6:13 is more nearly "plunder," that is, gain gotten by violence or dishonesty. So, also, in 8:10. In both of these cases the parallel term is "falsehood," but in 22:17 it is associated with three other words denoting violence. These passages should therefore be added to those

[1] See also Jer. 22:3, 17.
[2] Jer. 7:6; 22:3.
[3] Jer. 17:11.
[4] Jer. 22:13 f.

previously cited in condemnation of theft and robbery. Not that the prophet would not have condemned covetousness, properly so called. It would find no place under the new covenant, with the law of God written in the hearts of his people.[1]

A second general requirement in social matters, according to Jeremiah, is truth in the broad sense that includes trustworthiness. This also is pleasing to Yahweh. His eyes, therefore, according to 5:3, "look for" (E.V., "upon") it. It was, however, sadly lacking in any sense in Jeremiah's day. He sought it in Jerusalem in vain.[2] In 7:28 he declares that "truth is perished." In this last passage he refers more particularly to the prevalence of falsehood, which he describes as veritably epidemic among his people. "They bend their tongues," he says, "like a bow for falsehood,"[3] and again, "They deceive every one his neighbor, and do not speak the truth; they have taught their tongues to speak lies; they weary themselves with dishonesty."[4] He charges that they cannot be trusted, "although they say, As Yahweh liveth,"[5] that is, even when they take oath to their assertions. An example of this sort is found in chaps. 42 f., where the story is told how the survivors from the massacre at Mizpah came to Jeremiah, promising, "Yahweh be a true and faithful witness against us, if we do not according to all the word wherewith Yahweh thy God shall send to us, whether it be good or whether it be evil"; and how, when the prophet in the name of Yahweh urged them to stay in their own country and submit to the king of

[1] Jer. 31:33. [3] Jer. 9:3. [5] Jer. 5:2.
[2] Jer. 5:1. [4] Jer. 9:5.

Babylonia, they accused him of falsehood, and migrated to Egypt, taking him with them in spite of his protest.

The falsity of Jeremiah's time showed itself, not only in wanton statements, but in treacherous conspiracies. Thus, the prophet early in his career received the inner warning, "Thy brethren, and the house of thy father (Anathoth), even they have dealt treacherously with thee; even they have cried aloud after thee; believe them not, although they speak fair words to thee."[1] A little later he could say of his people generally that they were "an assembly of treacherous men,"[2] and issue the warning, "Take ye heed every one of his neighbor, and trust ye not in any brother, for every brother will surely supplant, and every neighbor will go about slandering."[3] There were some who resorted to cunning and deception to get wealth. Jeremiah says of them: "They watch as fowlers lie in wait; they set a trap, they catch men. Like a cage full of birds, so are their houses full of (the fruits of) deception: therefore are they become great, and have waxed rich."[4]

The passages thus far quoted apply to the people as a whole, or to a large, but indefinite, proportion among them. There are others in which the prophet is more specific. One of the most interesting and important is Jer. 8:8. The persons here addressed are the people, whom the prophet has just accused of ignorance of the government of Yahweh. He anticipates their answer. It is, "We are wise, and the law of Yahweh is with us"; or, more freely rendered, "Nay, rather, we are familiar with it. Have we not the law of Yahweh with us?"

[1] Jer. 12:6.
[2] Jer. 9:2.
[3] Jer. 9:4.
[4] Jer. 5:26 f.

To this he retorts, "But the false pen of the scribe hath wrought falsely." This passage must be interpreted in the light of 7:21 ff. There, it will be remembered, Jeremiah repudiates offerings and sacrifices as essentials of religion, and denies that Yahweh gave commandment concerning them when he brought Israel out of Egypt. This being the case, the false scribes here mentioned must be the priests who, two verses later, as well as in 6:13, are accused of dealing falsely, and whose false work probably consisted in changes and additions bearing on religious observances in the law with which the people claimed to be familiar. It appears, therefore, that already in Jeremiah's day the priests had begun to put into writing ceremonial requirements which they represented as divinely ordained, but which he refused to recognize as original or essential elements of the national religion and binding upon its adherents.

It is possible that some of the prescriptions of the Levitical law now found in the Pentateuch were put into written form about this time, but it would be difficult to identify them. There is, however, in the Book of Jeremiah itself a sacerdotal interpolation which, although, of course, it is later, fairly illustrates the tendency that the prophet was combating. It is 33:14, a more elaborate version of 23:5–8, the well-known messianic prophecy in the first two verses of which Yahweh promises to "raise up to David a righteous Branch" whose name shall be called "Yahweh our righteousness." The interpolator transfers this name from the Branch to Jerusalem and adds, vss. 17 f., "For thus saith Yahweh, David shall never want a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall

the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings and to do sacrifice continually." Then, to strengthen this amendment, he says further, vss. 19–22, in the name of Yahweh and Jeremiah: "If ye can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, so that there shall not be day and night in their season, then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, or the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister to me."

The prophet is very severe on the priests, but more so on the prophets of his time. He constantly couples the two orders, both of which were bitterly hostile to him, but he gives most prominence to the latter, because, as he says, the priests are controlled by them.[1] The prophets whom Jeremiah so severely criticized and so strenuously opposed were not false in the sense of being prophets of Baal or any other false god or gods. They claimed to be mouthpieces of Yahweh.[2] To be sure, they generally received, or professed to receive, their messages in dreams, but this had always been a perfectly legitimate means of communication between God and man.[3] The prophet's complaint is that they are steeped in the prevalent dishonesty,[4] that they not only presume to prophesy without Yahweh's authority,[5]

[1] Jer. 5:31.

[2] Jer. 14:14 f.; 23:17, 25, 30; etc. In 2:8, 26; 23:13, and 32:32 the prophet is not referring to his own time, but to the past, and especially that of the kingdom of Israel.

[3] Num. 12:6; Deut. 13:1 ff. [4] Jer. 6:13; 8:10.

[5] Jer. 14:14 f.; 23:14; 27:15; 29:8 f., 23, 31.

but to issue lies in his name,[1] and that they thus cause his people to trust in falsehood.[2] The last passage cited indicates what was the nature of the lies in which these prophets dealt. They were optimistic messages for which Jeremiah could find no warrant. Sometimes they were attempts to quiet the fear of retribution in their authors or others equally wicked,[3] but sometimes the authors of them must have been misled, for example, by national pride, or the mistaken interpretation of the messages of former prophets. The latter suggestion explains such passages as 7:4, where the reference to the temple as a pledge of divine protection is probably an echo, but a belated one, of the teaching of Isaiah.

Jeremiah had no occasion for personal hostility to foreigners, but the contrary. When he was seized by the princes and imprisoned, it was an Ethiopian eunuch who rescued him from the cistern into which they had thrown him,[4] and when Jerusalem was taken the Babylonians not only spared him but treated him with the greatest consideration.[5] His previous attitude toward them warranted such treatment, for, although he knew that they were to conquer and devastate his country, he was so clear about their commission from Yahweh that he showed no resentment toward them. As for the surrounding peoples, he could not help seeing that they, like Judah, must go down before Nebuchadrezzar, but he makes no specific charges against them and manifests no pleasure in the prediction of their downfall. See 25:15 ff.

[1] Jer. 14:14; 23:25 f.; 27:9 f., 14; 29:21, 23.
[2] Jer. 28:15.
[3] Jer. 23:14 f.; 29:23.
[4] Jer. 38:1 ff.
[5] Jer. 39:11 ff.

CHAPTER XVI

THE DEUTERONOMIC ELEMENT IN THE BOOKS OF KINGS

There is a Deuteronomic element in the Books of Kings as well as in those that precede them, with this difference, that, whereas, in Samuel, for example, it consists of additions to a previously existing work, in Kings the framework throughout is Deuteronomic as well as some other and later portions. In other words, the history of Israel from the accession of Solomon onward is presented from the Deuteronomic, and, indeed, the later Deuteronomic standpoint. When, therefore, reference is made to the law of Yahweh,[1] or the law of Moses,[2] or the commandments, statutes, and judgments of Yahweh,[3] it is Deuteronomy in substantially its completed form that is intended, especially those portions of it that deal with exclusive devotion to Yahweh and the centralization of his worship at Jerusalem.

Naturally the author has little that is favorable to say about the kingdom of Israel. In fact, he condemns its rulers, one after another, without exception. Jeroboam, he says, started them on a heretical course when he "made two calves of gold" and "set the one in Bethel and put the other in Dan."[4] "This thing,"

[1] II Kings 10:31; 17:13, 34, 37; 21:8.

[2] II Kings 14:6; 21:8; 23:25.

[3] I Kings 2:3; 3:14; 5:12; 8:58, 61; 9:46; 11:33 f., 38; II King 17:13, 16, 19, 34, 37; 18:6; 23:3.

[4] I Kings 12 f.

he declares, "became a sin,"[1] and thereby he "caused Israel to sin."[2] The all but uniform statement is that the given ruler "did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin."[3] This is for some reason modified in the case of Hoshea, who is said to have done "that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, yet not as the kings of Israel that were before him."[4] There is not a word from this writer to indicate how well or ill any of them performed his duties to his subjects, even in the general review in which he gives the reasons for the overthrow and dispersion of the northern tribes.[5] It was because they had "feared other gods," "built them high places in their cities," and "served idols," that "Yahweh was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight."

The kings of Judah are measured by the same standard. The result in their cases is more favorable, yet the best of them, like Asa, fall short in that, however loyal they may otherwise have been, the author is obliged to admit that in their reigns "the high places were not taken away."[6] Of the worst he can say nothing more severe than that they "walked in the way of the kings of Israel."[7]

It is clear that one cannot expect much specific teaching of a strictly ethical character from this writer. There are, however, a few passages in which one gets glimpses of his attitude toward certain practices. Thus, in I Kings 14:24 he refers to the presence of

[1] I Kings 12:30.
[2] I Kings 14:16.
[3] I Kings 15:34.
[4] II Kings 17:2.
[5] II Kings 17:7 ff.
[6] I Kings 15:14, etc.
[7] II Kings 16:3.

sodomites in the land, and in 15:12 mentions with approval the banishment of them by Asa. It is a Deuteronomic passage[1] in which the number of Solomon's wives and concubines is recorded, but it is evident that the writer objected less to the size of the harem than to the foreign women of whom it was largely composed and by whom the king was led away from Yahweh. There is a passage that would indicate greater sensitiveness to purely ethical considerations. It is I Kings 15:5, where the commendation bestowed upon David to the effect that he always did "that which was right in the eyes of Yahweh" is qualified by the addition of the words, "save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." Since, however, these additional words are wanting in the Greek Version, it is probable that the compiler of the Books of Kings, like the Chronicler, simply ignored a sad blot on the virtue and honor of the national hero.[2]

The Book of the Covenant, in Exod. 21:6 and 22:8 f., requires that in certain cases an oath be administered "before God," that is, at the nearest local sanctuary. The original Deuteronomist so modified the law that, in the case of a servant who refused to leave his master, the ceremony making him a perpetual bondman should be performed at the home of the master.[3] It was also ordained in the Deuteronomic Code that matters which could not be settled by the local authorities should be brought to the place that Yahweh had chosen for adjudication.[4] There, according to the original text of the passages cited, they were to be laid before the

[1] I Kings 11:1 ff.

[2] Cf. II Sam. 10:12 and I Chron. 19:1 ff.

[3] Deut. 15:17.

[4] Deut. 17:8 ff.; 19:17 f.

civil judge, or judges, then in office, but the present reading makes "the priests" joint arbiters in the cases in question.[1] The Deuteronomic author of I Kings 8:31 f. seems to ignore the civil magistrates, making Solomon in his prayer allude only to the settlement of disputes at the altar of the new sanctuary. This does not, however, argue any lack of interest in justice, for he puts into the mouth of the king a petition that Yahweh may guide the proceedings, "condemning the wicked, by bringing his way upon his own head, and justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness."

There are one or two exceptions to the rule that in the Books of Kings the Deuteronomic standard is religious rather than ethical. One of them is found in II Kings 14:6, where it is related, with evident approval, that, when Amaziah came to the throne, he slew the men who had assassinated his father, but refrained from putting to death their children, in accordance with the law of Deut. 24:16, where it is forbidden to put to death fathers for children or children for fathers. Of course, it is doubtful if the law quoted had been formulated in Amaziah's day, but that is a question which is not of consequence in this connection. The point is that the author recognized the principle involved and commended its alleged adoption by Amaziah.

Here should be cited, also, II Kings 21:16 and 24:4, where one of the charges against Manasseh and Jehoiakim is that they "filled Jerusalem with innocent blood."

[1] In the Greek of Deut. 17:9 the words rendered "unto the priests the Levites and" are wanting.

The attitude of the compiler of the Books of Kings toward foreigners has already been noted in connection with the reference to Solomon's harem.[1] It was hostile because the king's foreign wives led their common husband away from the national God. It would naturally have been different had they, forgetting their own peoples and the houses of their fathers,[2] made his people their people and his God their God.[3] It is not strange, therefore, to find that, in I Kings 8:41 ff., Solomon is represented as commending to the favor of Yahweh the foreigner who comes from a far country to worship in the temple at Jerusalem.

In this connection mention should be made of an interesting inconsistency in the first Book of Kings. In 5:13 it is distinctly stated that Solomon made the levy of laborers sent to Lebanon "out of all Israel"; but a later writer, jealous for the reputation of the king, inserted 9:20–22, where the reader is informed that it was not Hebrews who were impressed into this service, but "the people that were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the children of Israel," who then became "bondservants unto this day."

[1] I Kings 11:1 ff. [2] Ps. 45:10. [3] Ruth 1:16.

CHAPTER XVII

EZEKIEL AND HIS TIMES

Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, was a priest, but there is little else in which they resembled each other. Thus, Ezekiel seems to have been younger than Jeremiah and to have survived the latter some years. It was also Ezekiel's fortune to be carried into captivity with Jehoiachin (597 B.C.), and thenceforth to be associated with the better class of his people, while Jeremiah went to Egypt with the dregs of the population. Again, it was Ezekiel's mission to foster and develop the hope of restoration which Jeremiah had been permitted only to kindle. Finally, Ezekiel was so constituted that he saw in religious institutions and observances more value and importance than Jeremiah had ever attributed to them. Not that he neglects ethical considerations. Indeed, he gives to the relation between Yahweh and his people a distinctly ethical character, using for this purpose the figure employed by Hosea and Jeremiah, and developing it more fully than either of them. Thus, in Ezek., chap. 16, Yahweh is represented as recalling the history of Judah as the career of an unfaithful wife. The same figure is employed in chap. 23, but in a somewhat different form. Here, also, Israel and Judah are sisters, called respectively Oholah and Oholibah, but this time they are both wives of Yahweh and both play the harlot.

The use made of the above illustration shows that Ezekiel reckoned idolatry, without reference to its

peculiar observances, an offense against morality, like murder or adultery. He classes it with such offenses in chap. 18, where he describes the just man as one who "hath not eaten on the mountains, or lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, or defiled his neighbor's wife," etc. This chapter is noteworthy, further, because in it Ezekiel adopts the individualistic standpoint of Jeremiah.[1] Indeed, he quotes the proverb to which his predecessor objected, and devotes the greater part of the chapter to the development of the contrary doctrine. He starts with the general proposition, put into the mouth of Yahweh, "All souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine." That is, every human being has an immediate relation to his Maker, to whom he is directly responsible for his personal conduct, and by whom he will eventually be rewarded or punished according to his deserts. He declares that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," but that "the just man shall surely live." The just man is described in terms partly positive and partly negative. There is, first, the inclusive positive definition, "just, and doeth justice and righteousness," then a series of distinctions which may be arranged in a decalogue, as follows:

1. "Hath not eaten on the mountains, or lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel."

2. "Hath not defiled his neighbor's wife."

3. "Doth not come near to a woman in her impurity."

4. "Doth not oppress any."

5. "Restoreth to the debtor his pledge."

[1] Jer. 31:29 f.

6. "Doth not take aught by robbery."

7. "Giveth his bread to the hungry, and covereth the naked with a garment."

8. "Doth not lend on discount or take interest."

9. "Withdraweth his hand from iniquity."

10. "Doeth true justice between man and man."

Finally the various items are summed up in the general requirement, "In my statutes he walketh, and he is careful to do my judgments."

This is the just man. He shall live. But not his son, unless he follows in the footsteps of his father. Otherwise he must surely die. On the other hand, if this son has a son who follows the example of his grandfather, he will not be punished for the sins of his father, but rewarded according to his righteousness in the sight of Yahweh. In fine, "the righteousness of the righteous," he says, "shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

There seem to have been those in Ezekiel's day who refused to accept this teaching, claiming that it argued instability in God, so mechanical and demoralizing had become their idea of the doctrine of election. The prophet insists that it is required by the very nature of Yahweh; that, being himself a just being, he cannot punish a good man or reward a bad one. Indeed, he goes farther and applies the same doctrine to the same man in different attitudes to the divine will and law. "If the wicked," says Yahweh, "turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live. None of his transgressions that he hath committed shall be remembered against him; in his righteousness that he hath wrought he shall live. Have I any

pleasure in the death of the wicked? saith the Lord Yahweh, and not rather that he should return from his way and live? But, when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that he hath done shall be remembered; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die."[1] Thus the attitude of God to every man at any given moment is consistent with, and an expression of, his moral character. His way is always "equal."

These words, when they were first uttered, gave offense; but there came a time when the Jews in captivity began to realize their condition and "pine away" in their sins.[2] Then the prophet repeated them in a form that made them not so much a warning as an evangel to his anxious brethren.

Attention should here be called to 14:12 ff., where Ezekiel combats another form of the doctrine of vicarious righteousness. In this passage Yahweh declares that, if a land sinned against him, and he undertook, by any of the various means he employs, to punish it, "although Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it," their righteousness would not avail to protect even their own children; they would thereby deliver only "their own souls."[3]

[1] Ezek. 18:21–24. [2] Ezek. 33:10 ff.

[3] The doctrine here taught seems to be contradicted by Ezek. 21:3, where Yahweh threatens in destroying Jerusalem to cut off "the righteous and the wicked." The fact that the Greek Version reads "the unjust and the wicked" suggests that the text is corrupt, but it is possible that, as Kraetzschmar explains, the passage, being an early one, reflects a temporary mood and not the prophet's settled conviction.

The prophet Ezekiel has less to say than some of the others about the personal habits and dispositions of those to whom he addressed himself. He refers to the "iniquity" of Sodom, but, strangely enough, specifies only pride, luxury, security, and neglect of the unfortunate.[1] The positive instruction he gives is confined to 44:21, where he forbids the priests to drink wine, "when they enter," that is, before they enter "the inner chamber," the object of this prohibition evidently being to prevent mistakes, or worse, in the conduct of the ritual. See Lev. 10:9 f.

In the same connection Ezekiel restricts the priests in the matter of marriage. One of their number may not take to wife the widow of a layman, a woman who has been divorced, or a foreigner; but must take a virgin "of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that is the widow of a priest."[2] The prophet evidently permitted polygamy, otherwise he would not, in chap. 23, have represented Israel and Judah figuratively as the wives of Yahweh. The fact that he pictured the unfaithfulness of his people toward Yahweh as adultery shows what he thought of conjugal infidelity. He includes it in his indictment of the princes of Judah,[3] as well as in the decalogue above given.[4] In 22:10 f. he mentions three different forms of incest as prevalent in his day; also, as a second count,[5] as if it were only less atrocious than "the shedding of blood," contempt for parents.

The schedules just cited also give one a pretty good idea of Ezekiel's views on the subject of social ethics.

[1] Ezek. 16:49 f. [2] Ezek. 44:22. [3] Ezek. 22:11.

[4] Ezek. 18:6, 11, 15; also 33:26.

[5] Ezek. 22:7.

Indeed, there is no more complete survey of the duty of man to man outside the recognized codes. The prophet naturally lays stress upon justice in general as a requirement in social life: justice in the conduct of every member of the community toward every other,[1] as well as in the official action of those whose duty it is to settle controversies between man and man.[2] The contrary practice is elsewhere as vigorously condemned by Ezekiel as by any of his predecessors in the prophetical office.[3] The "ordinances" of Yahweh are the norm in accordance with which justice must be administered.[4]

The prophet takes repeated occasion throughout his book to inculcate respect for the person,[5] or to arraign his people or their rulers for the contrary. For some time before the overthrow of the Jewish monarchy the country was in a condition bordering on anarchy. There was, to be sure, a semblance of government, but the kings, being the creatures of Egypt or Babylonia, felt no responsibility to or for their subjects. They were therefore cruel and arbitrary. The prophet, in chap. 34, compares them to shepherds who look only after their own interests. "Ye eat the milk," he says, "and clothe yourselves with the wool, and kill the fatlings; but ye feed not the sheep." Their example was naturally followed by their underlings, who also, in their smaller spheres, ruled "with force and harshness."[6] Finally the land was filled with violence,[7] and even the sojourner, the widow, and the orphan, whose weakness

[1] Ezek. 18:5.
[2] Ezek. 18:8.
[3] Ezek. 9:9; 45:9.
[4] Ezek. 44:24.
[5] Ezek. 18:7, 16, 18.
[6] Ezek. 34:4.
[7] Ezek. 7:23; 8:17.

ought to have been their protection, were oppressed without mercy.[1] Nor did the oppressors stop short of bloodshed. This is clear from 22:25, where the prophet charges that the "leaders"[2] in Jerusalem are "like a roaring lion, rending prey: they have devoured souls; . . . . her widows have they multiplied in her midst." See also vs. 27, where there is a similar charge against the "princes," who, "like wolves rending prey, while they pour out blood, destroy souls." There can be little doubt that in both of these passages the offense charged is nothing short of wholesale murder. There are several other passages that have been given the same interpretation, because, like the latter of the two quoted, they contain a reference to bloodshed. Thus, in 7:23, where the prophet declares that "the land is full of bloodshed,[3] and the city is full of violence," he is supposed to have intended to accuse his people of two distinct crimes, murder and violence. The word "blood," however, does not always denote or imply death, or even serious physical suffering, from violence. A good illustration of a different, but perfectly natural, usage is found in Isa. 1:15, where the prophet introduces an exhortation by the accusation, "Your hands are full of blood." The meaning of the word "blood" in this

[1] Ezek. 22:7, 29.

[2] The text has "prophets," but it is better, with the Greek Version and the best modern authorities, to adopt the above reading, since otherwise this verse would anticipate vs. 28, where the prophets come in their proper order.

[3] The text has, literally, "judgment of blood," for which the English Version has "bloody crimes"; but the word rendered "judgment" is evidently a copyist's error for the very similar one meaning "outpouring," wrongly translated "oppression" in Isa. 5:7.

connection appears from what follows. It denotes the guilt incurred by the evil deeds of the persons addressed. But these deeds, according to vs. 17, must have been the contraries of those there recommended, namely, injustice, oppression, and the neglect of the unfortunate. The term "bloodshed," therefore, seems to have been used typically for any or all of the more serious offenses, especially of men against men, known among the Hebrews, as well as for murder. This being conceded, it at once becomes a question whether, in Ezek. 7:23, one should not render the latter half of the verse, "for the land is full of crime (blood), and the city is full of violence." A clearer case is that of 18:10 ff., where the hypothetical son is described, literally, vs. 10, as "violent" and "a shedder of blood," but actual bloodshed is not mentioned among the offenses by which he is represented as justifying this characterization.[1]

Among the other passages in which "bloodshed" has a typical meaning are two, 22:2 ff. and 24:6 ff., in which Jerusalem is called "the city of blood,"[2] that is, the city guilty of the most grievous offenses. What these offenses were may be learned from 22:6 ff., where, after the princes have been described as shedding blood, each according to his ability, they and their people are accused of contempt of parents, oppression of the unfortunate, disregard of holy rites and seasons, slander, idolatry, incest, impurity, adultery, bribery,

[1] The latter half of vs. 10 being a gloss, the first two lines of the passage may be translated.

10a. "If he beget a violent, lawless son,
11a. Who hath not done any of these things."

[2] E. V., "the bloody city."

usury, and robbery. In the cases of slander and bribery the addition of the final clause, "for the purpose of shedding blood," may imply a conspiracy against the life of a third party. In 33:25 and 36:18 bloodshed probably covers all forms of lawlessness, as distinguished from idolatry,[1] but in 23:45, since the offenders are the sisters representing Israel and Judah, and they are to be arraigned as adulteresses, it must be interpreted as including disloyalty to Yahweh.

In the number of the offenses of which the princes of Judah were accused was robbery. There is none that seems to have been more prevalent toward the close of the regal period in Judah, or to have been more severely condemned by Ezekiel.[2] It is one of the marks by which he distinguishes the wicked from the righteous.[3] No one who has been guilty of it, he teaches, can expect to enjoy the favor of Yahweh without restoring to its rightful owners whatever he may have acquired by injustice or violence.[4] The leaders were the chief offenders, and they sometimes put people out of the way to get "dishonest gain."[5]

The practices just described would naturally first attract the prophet's attention, but he did not overlook the less violent methods by which his contemporaries relieved one another of their possessions. He requires of the princes of Israel, not only that they "do away with violence and spoil," but that they "have

[1] These passages are both, for the most important part, wanting in the Greek Version, in the case of 33:25 perhaps through the oversight of a copyist.

[2] Ezek. 22:13, 29.

[3] Ezek. 18:12, 16, 18.

[4] Ezek. 33:15; 45:9.

[5] Ezek. 22:25, 27.

just balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath," and he fixes for the future the relation of the common weights and measures to one another. See 45:9 ff.; also the prophecy, 28:18, in which he threatens Tyre with destruction on account of the dishonesty of her traffic.

In the matter of loans Ezekiel marks a new stage of development. The Book of the Covenant simply forbade the oppression of the poor debtor.[1] In Deut. 23:19 f. the Hebrews are permitted to take a discount from foreigners, but not from one another, either on money or produce. The prophet makes no reference to this distinction, but it is possible that he expected it to be continued. He does, however, modify the Deuteronomic law in one direction, namely, in that he forbids, not only discounts,[2] the subtraction of a certain part or percentage in advance from the face of the loan, but "increase" or interest, properly so called, an addition for the use of the same to the amount loaned.[3] It is one of the counts in his indictment against "the bloody city" that its princes and others have "taken discount and interest" from their neighbors.[4]

There are four passages in which pledges for debt find mention. In three of these[5] the practice of requiring such pledges is recognized; also the proviso made in the earliest legislation,[6] that a garment must be restored to its owner at nightfall. In the fourth[7] the just man

[1] Exod. 22:25. The last clause of the verse is a Deuteronomic addition.

[2] A.V., "usury"; R.V., "interest."

[3] See Ezek. 18:8, 13, 17.

[4] Ezek. 22:2.

[5] Ezek. 18:7, 12; 33:15.

[6] Exod. 22:26 f.

[7] Ezek. 18:16.

is described as one who "hath not taken aught to pledge," as if the prophet would have liked to abolish the practice.

The reason why discount and interest were forbidden among the Hebrews is that, as has already been explained, loans were generally made to the unfortunate, to enable them to meet an emergency, and were regarded as expressions of charity. The same spirit prompted those who had possessions to give of their substance to those who were in want. The prophet commends this practice.[1] He evidently regarded it as a duty, not only of Jews, but of universal humanity. Hence he condemns Sodom because "she did not strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."[2]

Ezekiel did not have so frequent occasion as Jeremiah to dwell on truthfulness in human relations, yet there are several passages in which he shows that he was anything but lax in the matter. He also knew false prophets, and rebuked them as sternly as his predecessor. He arraigns them in 22:28 among the classes that have incurred the wrath of Yahweh, because they "whitewash" with false visions, saying, "Thus saith the Lord Yahweh, when Yahweh hath not spoken." He deals with them at length in 13:1 ff. He first compares them to foxes, because they do not build, but undermine, by encouraging their people to hope when there is no ground for encouragement. In vs. 10 he introduces for the first time the figure to which there was a reference in the passage just cited from chap. 22. This verse, in the Revised Version, reads, "They have seduced my people, saying, Peace, and there is no peace: and

[1] Ezek. 18:7, 16. [2] Ezek. 16:49.

when one buildeth up a wall, behold, they daub it with untempered *mortar*": a translation that is in more than one respect unsatisfactory. In the first place, it is ambiguous, for, although it is clear that the seducers are the false prophets, one cannot tell whether the builder of the wall is Yahweh, a prophet, or one of the people. In point of fact it is neither, but the people as a whole, and the wall is the baseless plans and hopes by which they are trying to fend the fear of Nebuchadrezzar and his army. This wall the prophets "whitewash" (R.V., margin), which, being interpreted, means that they mislead the people and expose them to additional danger by encouraging them in their dreams of deliverance and concealing from them the insecurity of the grounds of their confidence. It would be better, therefore, to render vss. 10–12 as follows: "They have misled my people, saying, Peace, when there was no peace; and, when these built a wall, lo, they daubed it with whitewash. Say to those that daub with whitewash,[1] There shall be a flood of rain, and hailstones shall fall, and a storm-wind shall break loose; and lo, when the wall hath fallen, shall it not be said to you, Where is the coating wherewith ye daubed it?"

Ezekiel takes occasion to testify his condemnation of faithlessness in a passage on the revolt of the Jews under Zedekiah. He says[2] that, when Nebuchadrezzar took Jerusalem the first time and replaced Jehoiachin by Zedekiah, he put the latter under oath, his object

[1] The clause "and (not "that") it shall fall," which immediately follows, is a gloss.

[2] Ezek. 17:13 ff.

being "that the kingdom might be humble, ... keep the covenant with him, and so endure"; but that Zedekiah soon broke his oath and instituted a revolt by sending to Egypt for men and horses. The prophet, making no account of the circumstance that the oath was given to a foreigner, exclaims, "Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth these things? break a covenant and escape!?" Finally, it appears that the reason why he is so indignant is that an oath by a Hebrew to whomsoever given is an appeal to Yahweh and the breaking of it dishonors him as the national Deity.[1]

The Book of Ezekiel is interesting for the evidence it presents of a changed attitude toward foreigners. In early times, as has been shown, the Hebrews were very hospitable toward the peoples that dwelt among or about them. Witness the story of Judah and Tamar,[2] the adoption of the Calebites,[3] the employment by David of Philistines and other foreigners, especially about his own person.[4] These foreign guards performed an important part in the revolution in which Athaliah was deposed and Joash, the rightful heir to the throne, made king.[5] There were at that time foreigners serving in the temple, as the Gibeonites are said to have been condemned to do.[6] It was perhaps such servants who, according to I Sam. 2:15, waited upon the officiating priests in Eli's time at Shiloh. They were called Nethinites (given), according to Ezra 8:20, because "David and the princes had given them for the service of the Levites." Now, Ezekiel objected to the employ-

[1] Ezek. 13:19; Exod. 20:7.
[2] Gen., chap. 38.
[3] Josh. 15:13 ff.
[4] I Sam. 8:18; 15:18.
[5] II Kings 11:4 ff.
[6] Josh. 9:27.

ment of foreigners in any capacity in the temple. He reckoned it among the "abominations" of which the house of Israel had been guilty, that they had brought "foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh," into the sanctuary "to profane it" when they offered their sacrifices to Yahweh.[1] He therefore represents Yahweh as ordaining, "No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter my sanctuary, of any foreigners that are among the children of Israel." Their places he ingeniously proposes to supply from the Levites who departed from Yahweh "when Israel went astray," that is, from the priests of the local sanctuaries that were abolished by the Deuteronomic law. The Book of Deuteronomy itself made provision for them. It says: "If a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourneth, and come with all the desire of his soul to the place that Yahweh shall choose; then he shall minister in the name of Yahweh his God, as all his brethren the Levites do, who stand before Yahweh."[2] When, however, in 621 B.C., Josiah introduced his reforms, although the priests of the high places came to Jerusalem, and "ate bread among their brethren," "they came not up to the altar of Yahweh."[3] Ezekiel indorses this reservation. Speaking for Yahweh, he says: "They shall not come near to me, to execute the office of priest to me, or to come near to any of my holy things, and to the things that are most holy; but they shall bear their reproach for their abominations that they have committed. Yet will I make them keepers in charge of the house, for all the service thereof and

[1] Ezek. 44:6 ff. [2] Deut. 18:6 f. [3] II Kings 23:9.

for all that is done therein."[1] This proposal was made during the Exile. It could not, therefore, at once be carried into effect. In point of fact, it was never wholly adopted; for, although the rest of the priests were degraded, and called Levites in distinction from the sons of Zadok,[2] when the temple was rebuilt, and worship was resumed at Jerusalem, the Nethinites returned to their duties at the sanctuary, and continued to perform these duties until they were absorbed by the order of Levites.[3]

The prophet, strongly as he objected to the employment of foreigners about the temple, did not propose to banish the sojourners among the Jews from the country. Indeed, he makes more liberal provision for them than any of his predecessors. In 47:21 ff. he directs that, when the land is redivided, the sojourners who have lived long enough among the Jews to beget children—he seems to take for granted that they will be circumcised—shall be "as the home-born among the children of Israel" and receive their portions, each in the tribe in which he chances to sojourn.

Ezekiel devotes several chapters in different parts of his book to foreign peoples. His attitude toward them is generally hostile; not, however, because they are aliens, but because by their conduct they have given him and his people cause for resentment. Thus, in 25:1 ff. he condemns the Ammonites because "they said Aha!" that is, rejoiced, "against the land of Israel, when it was made desolate, and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity"; and in the

[1] Ezek. 44:13 f. [2] Ezek. 44:15 ff.

[3] Ezra 2:58; Neh. 7:60; 10:28 ff.

same connection he brings a similar charge against Moab, Edom, Philistia, and Phoenicia.[1] Yahweh, he declares, has decreed their humiliation, that there may be "no more for the house of Israel a pricking brier or a hurting thorn among all about them that treat them despitefully." See also 35:1 ff. In chaps. 29–32 there is a succession of oracles in which the Egyptians are threatened with invasion and subjugation by Nebuchadrezzar, because, according to 29:6, when Jerusalem was besieged, the Egyptians, although they made a demonstration against the Babylonians, proved but "a staff of reed to the house of Israel." In chaps. 38 f. Gog represents the hostile gentile world, by the destruction of which, the prophet teaches, Yahweh will rescue his people and vindicate his godhead in the eyes of all mankind.[2]

[1] Ezek. 25:8, 12, 15; 26:2. [2] Ezek. 38:19 ff.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

This little book is traditionally ascribed to Jeremiah. The tradition is as old as the beginning of the third century before the Christian era, being found in II Chron. 35:25. When, however, one studies the book carefully, one finds that it cannot be attributed to Jeremiah or any other single writer. That the prophet did not write the whole of it is clear from 5:7. In this passage the author complains,

> Our fathers sinned, and are not,
> And we have borne their iniquities.

But Jeremiah expressly repudiates such teaching, his own being that "every one shall die for his own iniquity."[1] If, however, as is claimed, none of the poems of which the book is composed can be dated earlier than Ezekiel, because they betray his influence, they were probably all written before the end of the Exile. They appear to fit this period, all of them. Moreover, they all agree in one feature that should be noted in this connection, namely, that they recognize the moral character of the divine government[2] and humbly accept the chastisement inflicted as none too severe in view of the multitude and seriousness of the offenses of which the suffering people have been guilty. See Lam. 1:5; 4:6; 5:16; also 2:14 and 4:13, where the priests and the prophets receive especial mention as transgressors.

[1] Jer. 31:29 f.

[2] Lam. 1:18; 3:33 ff.

In so far as the instruments that Yahweh has chosen have gone beyond his instructions, they are guilty and must in their turn pay the penalty of their presumption.[1] The moral tone of the book comes out most strongly in Lam. 4:22, where the author announces to Zion the termination of her suffering, and to Edom the approach of a similar visitation, because the former has satisfied the demands of the divine justice while the latter has not yet atoned for her offenses.[2]

[1] Lam. 1:22; 3:64 ff.; 4:22; also Isa. 10:5 ff.

[2] Isa. 40:2.

CHAPTER XIX

ISAIAH, CHAPS. 40–55, AND RELATED PROPHECIES

The doctrine of the moral character of the divine government was prominent in the Book of Lamentations. It is more noticeably so in Isa., chaps. 40–55. There is not so much stress laid upon the offenses of the Chosen People in the past. Still they are not forgotten. Thus, in 43:26 Yahweh challenges Israel: "Put me in remembrance; let us implead each other. Set forth the case that thou mayst be justified." Then, without waiting for an answer, he proceeds with the accusation: "Thy first father (Jacob) sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me. . . . . Therefore I gave Jacob to the ban, and Israel to revilings." The same thought is figuratively expressed in 50:1, "Lo, for your iniquities were ye sold, and for your transgressions was your mother put away."[1] The great prophet of the Exile, however, claimed that these offenses of whatever kind and degree had been expiated by the sufferings of the Jews in captivity.[2] He begins his prophecies, therefore, with the announcement, "Speak ye comfortingly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her service is fulfilled, that her iniquity is pardoned; that she hath received from Yahweh double for all her sins."[3] This does not mean that the Jews are absolutely irreproachable, but that, having atoned for their past misdeeds, they are, relatively to other peoples,

[1] See also Isa. 42:24a.

[2] Isa. 47:6.

[3] Isa. 40:2.

sufficiently acceptable to Yahweh to warrant him in giving them a new trial; and it is from this point of view that the ethics of these chapters must be considered.

The author teaches that justice is inherent in the divine nature. He says of Yahweh in 40:14, "With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him the path of justice?" The path of justice is here the proper treatment, according to their desert, of men and nations, and the teaching is that Yahweh is able immediately and infallibly to discern this path. Yahweh also, according to 45:19, 23, speaks "righteousness" and declares "things that are right." Finally, his righteous nature requires him to follow "the path of justice" in his administration. Hence the Servant, in 49:4, in spite of seeming failure, declares, "Surely the justice due me is with Yahweh, and my reward with my God"; and, in 50:8, "he is near that justifieth me." It is only when men are blinded by their misfortunes that they are tempted to say, as some said during the Exile, "My way is hid from Yahweh, and the justice due me is passed beyond my God."[1] In 46:12 the term used is not "justice," but "righteousness," which, in these chapters, as in the Psalms, often has about the sense of "deliverance," and therefore is found in parallelism with a word having this signification. So in 45:21 ff., where Yahweh proclaims himself "a righteous God and a Savior," and invites "all the ends of the earth" to look to him and be saved, because "only in Yahweh is righteousness and strength," that is, deliver-

[1] Isa. 40:27; see also 46:12. In this passage the original reading, as appears from the Greek Version, was not אבירי לב "stout-hearted," but אברי לב "faint-hearted."

ance and security; also in 51:1, where to "follow after righteousness" is equivalent to seeking Yahweh for deliverance.

The righteousness of Yahweh reveals itself in all his ways. It was "for his righteousness' sake," to make known his righteousness, that he provided the "great and glorious law" that he gave to his people,[1] a law which, according to 51:7 f., should teach those who know it that the righteousness of the God whom it reveals "shall be forever," and his salvation "to all generations." The power by which he enforces his will is called his "righteous right hand,"[2] while the instruments he employs he summons "in righteousness" and rewards in accordance therewith.[3] The author of these chapters believed that not only the Servant of Yahweh, but also Cyrus, was such an instrument.[4] He therefore exhorted his brethren in captivity, some of whom could not believe that Yahweh would intrust such a mission to a gentile,[5] to prepare for their release. "I have brought near my righteousness," he declares in the name of Yahweh, "it is not far off, and my deliverance shall not tarry; yea, I will grant deliverance in Zion for Israel my glory."[6] See also 51:5 f., where Yahweh concludes with the assurance, "The heavens may vanish like smoke, and the earth wax old like a garment, while they that dwell thereon die like gnats; but my deliverance shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." In 45:8 there is a twofold usage. The verse reads, "Distil, ye heavens, from

[1] Isa. 42:21.
[2] Isa. 41:10.
[3] Isa. 41:2; 49:4; 51:8.
[4] Isa. 42:6; 45:13.
[5] Isa. 45:9 f.
[6] Isa. 46:13.

above, and let the clouds drip with righteousness; let the earth open, and be fruitful in deliverance, and let it send forth righteousness also; I, Yahweh, have created it." The key to this passage seems to be found in 55:10 f., where the word of Yahweh is compared to the falling rain or snow, "that watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater." If so, righteousness in the first instance denotes the law and its precepts, as an expression of the divine will and character, and, in the second, the results in man and nature of conformity to that law. This interpretation is confirmed by 54:14, where the righteousness in which the Chosen People are to be established is explained as freedom from oppression and anxiety. "This," says vs. 7, "is the heritage of the servants of Yahweh, and their righteousness from me."

The ethical character of Yahweh, as portrayed in these chapters, and of his relations with his people, is apparent. There are only two or three passages that produce a different impression. One of them is 43:25, where Yahweh is made to say, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins." Here, however, the phrase "for mine own sake," according to Duhm and others, is an interpolation. When it is removed, this passage, like 44:22, gives no reason for the purpose expressed, and one may infer from vs. 28, properly translated, "Therefore I profaned," etc., that it was because the Jews had already been sufficiently punished. It remains to consider 48:9–11. Here, again, any discrepancy alleged might be explained by adopting

the view of Duhm and others, that vss. 9 f. are an interpolation. The next might then be rendered, "For mine own sake, for mine own sake, will I act," etc., the act proposed being the introduction of Cyrus.[1] If vss. 9 f. are retained, it should be noted that in vs. 10 Yahweh reminds his people that although he has chosen them, he has chosen them "in the furnace of affliction"; in other words, that he has chosen them in the expectation that they will profit by the chastisement to which they have been subjected during the Exile.

The Exile not only brought the Jews to realize as never before the ethical character of the divine government; it also gave them new ideas on the subject of human excellence. In early times David was their ideal, other and later men being measured by this brave, impulsive, resourceful, and masterful warrior and ruler. During the Exile, with their wonderful ability to adapt themselves to existing conditions, they abandoned this ideal and chose another clothed in the virtues that bondage and suffering had developed in their best and noblest. He is the central figure of Isa., chaps. 40–55, the so-called Servant of Yahweh. He is described in one way or another in 42:1–4; 49:1–7; 50:4–9; and 52:13—53:12. In the first of these passages it is said of him that "he will not cry, or lift up his voice, or cause it to be heard in the streets."[2] And in the second he is described as "a servant of rulers";[3] that is, he is meek or humble.[4] He is gentle, also, says 42:3, and sympathetic. "A bruised reed will he not break, a dimly burning wick will he not quench."[5] Further,

[1] Isa. 48:11 ff. [2] Isa. 42:2. [3] Isa. 49:7.
[4] See also Isa. 50:5. [5] See also Isa. 50:4; 53:9.

he is patient, first in the sense of being constant. "He will not fail or be discouraged,"[1] trusting that, however long he may have to toil and wait, Yahweh will finally grant him the desire of his heart.[2] He is patient, also, in the sense that he accepts a cruel lot without murmuring. "I gave my back," he says, "to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting."[3] This feature is especially emphasized in 53:3, 7, 10. Finally the labor to which he devotes himself he does, not for his own advantage, but for the benefit of others,[4] and the suffering to which he is subjected is not on his own account, but he bears the griefs and carries the sorrows of others, and he is bruised for their iniquities, that through his stripes they may be healed.[5] He is himself assigned a portion "with the great," not because he has procured for himself wealth or power at the expense of others, but because "he poured out himself" in the completest self-sacrifice.[6] Such is the Servant of Yahweh of Isa., chaps. 40–55. In 55:3–5 the great prophet of the Exile calls upon his people to substitute this new ideal for the future David. Speaking for Yahweh, he says, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Then he explains what he means by the "mercies of David": "Lo, I gave him for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples," and adds, "Lo, thou shalt call a nation thou knowest not, and a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee," thus transferring the promise made to David to the nation as

[1] Isa. 42:4.
[2] Isa. 49:4; 50:7.
[3] Isa. 50:6.
[4] Isa. 42:3 f.; 49:6.
[5] Isa. 53:4 f.
[6] Isa. 53:12.

the servants of Yahweh and the bearers of his salvation to the world.

The last sentence suggests a third respect in which the Jews greatly changed during the Exile, namely, in their attitude toward foreigners. They had previously been in close contact only with the small tribes and peoples in and about Palestine, some of which they had conquered and held for a longer or shorter time in subjection. While they remained a nation, although they no longer wielded the power they once possessed, they still retained their national pride and found frequent occasion to show their contempt for their neighbors. The overthrow of the house of David and the destruction of Jerusalem showed them not only their weakness, but, as has been noted, their unworthiness of the distinction of which they had boasted. Moreover, it brought those who were carried into captivity into intimate relations with a great people and a much more complex civilization than that to which they themselves had attained. Under these circumstances the more thoughtful among them could hardly fail to realize that they were but a small fraction of the world of mankind, and that it was impossible for their God, if he was indeed the true God, not to have a purpose with reference to other nations larger than that of using them to chastise his chosen people. This broader view appears in Isa., chaps. 40–55. Not everywhere, or always in the same breadth; for there are passages that betray more or less narrowness and bitterness. In the first place, although the prophet recognizes the hand of Yahweh in the banishment of his people from their country, he cannot altogether acquit the Babylonians

of guilt in the matter. This is the way in which he represents Yahweh as arraigning their proud city: "I was wroth with my people, I profaned my inheritance, and gave them into thy hand. Thou didst show them no mercy. Upon the aged hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke."[1] "Therefore," he says, "shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know the dawning thereof: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it away: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou knowest not."[2] The most cruel of these passages is the next to the last, where Yahweh threatens to feed the Babylonian oppressors of his people with their own flesh and blood.

There are also a few passages in which the writer in one way or another represents the Jews as superior to other peoples. Thus, in 43:3 Yahweh is made to say that he will give Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba to Cyrus as a ransom for the exiles, while in 45:14 f. the same nations are pictured as bringing tribute and doing homage to the Jews as the people of the only true God. The same thought is put even more strongly in 49:22–24. See also 55:5. These passages are all marred by national conceit. At his best the prophet rises above such limitations. He does so in the passages in which he manifests his readiness to recognize Cyrus as the agent of Yahweh. The most flattering terms are applied to to him. He is "called," like the Servant.[3] He is "anointed" of Yahweh,[4] his "shepherd,"[5] and Yahweh

[1] Isa. 47:6.

[2] Isa. 47:11. See also Isa. 41:15 f.; 43:14; 45:14 f.; 48:14 f.; 49:24 ff.; 51:9 f.

[3] Isa. 41:2; 42:6; also 41:25; 45:3, 13; 46:11.

[4] Isa. 45:1. [5] Isa. 44:28.

loves him.[1] Some of the prophet's contemporaries, as has already been noted, objected to the use of such terms of a gentile, but he warns them not to presume to criticize the chosen of their Maker.[2] The same breadth of view is seen in 51:4 f., where Yahweh makes the announcement, "Instruction shall go forth from me, and my decree for a light to the peoples." The Servant of Yahweh is the instrument for carrying into effect this purpose. In 42:1 ff. it is declared that "he will bring forth justice to the gentiles," "set justice in the earth," and himself serve as "a light to the gentiles"; and in 49:6 that his mission is to "the ends of the earth." In 45:20 ff. Yahweh himself summons "the remnant of the nations," proclaims his unique Godhead, and invites them to share his salvation. "Look unto me," he pleads, "and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. By myself have I sworn, the word hath gone forth from my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." On this passage Duhm says, "This splendid sentence can only be the expression of the faith of the Second Isaiah in the unique Godhead of Yahweh, and its generous promise of the spread of the beneficent religion of Yahweh over the whole world rises far above the selfish and haughty monotheism of the later Jews." Yet this chapter is not so remarkable as chap. 53, if, as Marti and others hold, the speakers in vss. 1–10a are the gentiles, brought, through the ministry of the Servant, to a knowledge of Yahweh and the essence of true religion.

[1] Isa. 48:14. [2] Isa. 45:9 f.

It is not possible, even with the help of Isa., chaps. 40–55, to identify all the passages, large and small, that were added to the earlier prophetical books during the Exile; but there are certain prophecies against Babylon which evidently belong to this period. These are Isa., chaps. 13 f., and 21:1–10, and Jer., chaps. 50 f., and perhaps parts of Isa., chap. 10. They are all naturally hostile, as the two chapters from Jeremiah would not have been had they been written by the prophet to whom they are attributed. The ethical note is constantly emphasized. The great offender is, of course, Babylon,[1] but Israel is not held guiltless. This is strongly put in Jer. 51:5, which should be translated, "Israel is not forsaken, or Judah, of his God, Yahweh of Hosts, but[2] their land was full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel." In other words, Yahweh here contends, as he does in Isa. 50:1, that it is not his fault, but his people's, that they have suffered. In 50:7 he quotes their adversaries as defending themselves by saying, "We are not guilty, because they have sinned against Yahweh, the abode of righteousness, the hope of their fathers."[3] Yahweh himself recognizes the Babylonians as his instruments. Thus, in 51:7 he says, using a figure first found in 25:15 ff., "Babylon, in the hand of Yahweh, hath been a golden cup that made all the earth drunken." In 51:20 ff. he uses another figure, "A war-club art thou to me, a weapon of battle; and with thee will I break in pieces nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms," etc.

[1] In Isa., chap. 10, perhaps under the disguise of Assyria.

[2] E.V., "though."

[3] Cf. Isa. 31:23.

There is not in these prophecies any distinct statement to the effect that the Babylonians have exceeded their instructions, but it seems to be taken for granted. Hence they are accused of various forms of inhumanity. The author of Isa. 14:17 says they "made the world a desert and overthrew its cities," and 21:2 calls them "destroyers." One of their greatest crimes was the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem.[1] They were oppressors, too, of the cruelest type. They "smote the peoples in wrath with a continual smiting," and "trod down the nations in anger with an unsparing trampling";[2] so that the Jews were like "the yield of the threshing-floor."[3] In Isa. 21:2 the Babylonians are accused of dealing treacherously with other nations, and in 13:11 they are reckoned among the proud and haughty of the world, and threatened, like the rest, with retribution. See also Jer. 50:56. The teaching of Jer., chaps. 50 f., is that their time has already come,[4] that new instruments of Yahweh have been commissioned to do to them as they have done to their victims.[5] "As Babylon," says 51:49, "hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth." Thus will Yahweh avenge the destruction of his temple,[6] and deliver his long suffering people.[7] "In those days, and in that time . . . . the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found"; because they have all been forgiven.[8]

[1] Jer. 50:28; 51:11.
[2] Isa. 14:6.
[3] Isa. 21:10; also Jer. 50:33.
[4] Jer. 51:6, 33.
[5] Jer. 50:15, 29.
[6] Jer. 50:28; 51:11.
[7] Jer. 51:9 f.
[8] Jer. 50:20.

Thus far there has been no trace of sympathy or fellowship with those of other races. Something of the sort is found in Isa. 14:1, where it is foretold that, when the Jews are restored to their own country, "the sojourner among them shall join himself with them and shall cleave to the house of Jacob." This passage, however, according to Duhm and others, is post-exilic, and therefore need not be considered further in this connection.

The tone and spirit of these prophecies is much like those of the later Deuteronomic literature, and perhaps for the reason that their authors also were scribes, and not genuine prophets. They seem to gloat over the most horrible details. Thus, Isa. 13:7 f., describing the terror produced by the day of Yahweh, says, "All hands shall be feeble, and every human heart shall melt: and they shall be dismayed; pangs and sorrows shall take hold *of them;* they shall be in pain as a woman in travail: they shall look in amazement one at another; their faces shall be faces of flame."[1] The cruelty of the invaders is thus described in Isa. 13:15 f.: "Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is caught shall fall by the sword. Their infants also shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be rifled, and their wives ravished."[2] The desolation wrought is compared to that "when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah,"[3] and further described with the most gloomy and dreadful details.[4] In Isa. 21:3 f. the writer professes anguish at the vision revealed, but this is no doubt a literary artifice to heighten the interest

[1] See also Jer. 51:3 f.

[2] See also Jer. 50:35 ff.

[3] Isa. 13:19.

[4] See also Jer. 50:39 f.

of the reader. He cannot have seen or imagined anything more revolting than some of the cruelties described in the passages quoted. Cf. Isa., chap. 47, and the reserve with which its author treats the same subject.

CHAPTER XX

HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH, AND THEIR TIMES

A few years after the conquest of Babylonia by Cyrus—in 520 B.C., to be exact—there arose in Judea two prophets who worked together for the restoration of the Jewish community, and especially for the re-establishment of the worship of Yahweh at Jerusalem.

I. HAGGAI

Haggai, who seems to have been the elder, began the agitation for a new temple, and persevered until he persuaded Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest, and finally the people, to undertake the work. He kept them to their task by picturing to them the wealth and honor he saw in store for the new sanctuary. He predicted that its glory would be even greater than that of the famous temple built by Solomon.

It was in connection with this thought that Haggai made a prediction which should not be overlooked. In the Authorized Version it is rendered, "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts";[1] and the whole has been interpreted as a prophecy concerning the Messiah. This interpretation, however, has now been pretty generally abandoned, since it is clear to anyone familiar with Hebrew that the word translated "desire," and often written "Desire," is plural, and that therefore the prophet must have had

[1] Hag. 2:7.

in mind, not a person on whom the nations had fixed their expectations, but the desirable things in which the riches of the peoples of his time consisted. When, however, he says that these things will come, he means that those to whom they belong will bring them as presents; in other words, that the new temple will be enriched by pilgrims from foreign nations who will come thither to worship Yahweh. This prediction betrays the influence of the Second Isaiah. It does not, however, present the worthier side of universalism. Haggai was evidently a practical man, and had to deal with a generation struggling against material obstacles for physical existence, and he doubtless pictured the future of the house he wished to build in the way that would appeal to them most strongly. The fact that he succeeded—for the house "was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of Darius the king"[1]—shows that the Jews of his day were by no means averse to the admission of foreigners to the privileges and benefits of their religion.

2. ZECHARIAH

In the same year, 520 B.C., and only two months after Haggai, Zechariah gave utterance to the first of the prophecies attributed to him. He also was interested in the new temple, but he did not confine himself to that project. Consequently, in the eight chapters of his genuine prophecies—chaps. 9–14 of the book that bears his name being by other and later authors—there is considerable material for an estimate of his ethical position. Indeed, of all the later prophets he is the

[1] Ezra 6:15.

one whose teaching in this respect most nearly resembles that of the great "former prophets," to whom he more than once refers.[1]

This prophet confines himself entirely to social ethics. He evidently believed that all necessary instruction on the subject was contained in the "words" and "statutes" that Yahweh had directed his servants the prophets to deliver to his people.[2] In Zech. 7:9 f. he is specific with reference to the instruction thus given. It required, first of all, "true justice," absolute and invariable impartiality between man and man, without which society is always in a state of unstable equilibrium. It went farther and inculcated the principle that every man show "kindness and compassion" toward his neighbor, thus fusing the members of the community together in spite of their individual interests. The widow, the orphan, the sojourner, and the needy, he says—and the most casual reader of the earlier prophets cannot but have noted the fact—were especially commended to the sympathy of their more fortunate fellows. Finally, he names a third requirement which, in its searching character, reminds one of the last commandment of the Decalogue, namely, "Let none of you devise evil against his brother in his heart." This is the Golden Rule, negatively stated, and, as such, the fundamental demand of social morality. The three requirements, in themselves considered, are a remarkable epitome of social ethics. They acquire additional significance when one considers the setting in which they are found. The people of Bethel, it appears, had sent a delegation to Jerusalem to inquire of the priests

[1] Zech. 1:4; 7:7, 12. [2] Zech. 1:6.

whether, now that the Exile was ended, they should longer "weep in the fifth month,"[1] that is, observe the fast commemorating the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. The prophets, too, according to the present text, were consulted. At any rate, Zechariah, following the example of his predecessors, took occasion from the incident to revive the teaching of Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah on the relative value of ceremonial observances. He makes Yahweh say distinctly that the fasts observed during the Exile had no religious value, being as selfishly personal as were the feasts at which they gorged themselves.[2] Then he introduces his résumé of the teaching of "the former prophets."[3] It is clear that, with Micah, he intended to teach that the observance of these precepts, as representing the will of Yahweh, was true religion as well as genuine morality.[4] "Therefore," when the fathers persistently neglected them, he says, "there came great wrath" upon them "from Yahweh of Hosts."[5]

The quotations already made indicate clearly enough Zechariah's general position. There are other passages by which it is more closely defined. In the first place, there is his vision of the flying roll.[6] In this vision the prophet sees a roll passing through the air and carrying a curse over the face of the whole land. He learns that it is for the thief and the perjurer. Now, the prophet cannot have intended to give the reader to understand that there were only these two classes of offenders against morality among his people. They are merely representative; but they would not have been specified,

[1] Zech. 7:2 f. [3] Zech. 7:9 f. [5] Zech. 7:12.
[2] Zech. 7:5 f. [4] Mic. 6:8. [6] See Zech. 5:1 ff.

if stealing and false swearing had not been common in the prophet's day. That the latter was prevalent is further evident by the fact that in 8:17 he exhorts his people to "love no false oath." The vision as a whole signifies the banishment of offenses of every kind against religion and morality from the restored Jewish community.[1]

There are two virtues that Zechariah emphasizes in his eighth and last chapter. The whole chapter, by the way, although it was doubtless written by Zechariah, has a more subdued tone than the other seven. The explanation of this fact is doubtless to be found in the political history of the times. Haggai, it will be remembered, closed his book with a very enthusiastic indorsement of Zerubbabel as the heir to the promises made to David. It runs, "In that day, saith Yahweh of Hosts, will I take thee, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, and I will make thee as a signet; for I have chosen thee, saith Yahweh." Zechariah at first followed Haggai. In the vision of the lamp[2] he is one of "the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." He is the Branch of 3:8 and 6:12 f., of whom the prophet says in the latter passage, as originally written, "He shall build the temple of Yahweh; and he shall receive majesty, and sit and rule on his throne; and there shall be a priest (Joshua) on his right hand, and there shall be peaceful counsel between the two." Now, it is probable that, while Darius the

[1] The next vision, that of the woman named "Wickedness," at first sight seems to contradict this interpretation; but there is no conflict if, as is probably the case, wickedness there denotes idolatry.

[2] Zech. 4:1 ff.

king of Persia was engaged in subduing the provinces that revolted on the death of his predecessor Cambyses, he gave little heed to the pretensions of the Jewish prince, but that, when his hands were free, he in some way checked the movement for independence. The eighth chapter sounds as if its author had awoke as from a dream, and seen that the mission of his people could best be fulfilled, not under the leadership of a petty prince of his own race, but under the protection of the king of Persia. He therefore has nothing further to say about Zerubbabel, but pictures a quiet and prosperity for which there was no warrant except in dependence on the dominant oriental power. The advice he has to offer harmonizes with such an attitude. He insists, as did "the former prophets," on the practice of justice; but he characterizes the thing required as "peaceful justice,"[1] a justice that leaves both parties without an excuse for further contention, and repeats—how could he have omitted it?—the injunction of 7:10, "Let none of you devise evil in his heart against his neighbor."[2] The rule forbidding the neglect of the unfortunate is omitted, but it is practically involved in those already cited. In its stead there are two on the subject of reliability. In one of them Yahweh commands that every man "speak truth with his neighbor." This seemed to Zechariah of so great importance that he placed it first in his list, adding at the end the related injunction, already quoted, "Love no false oath." Now, it is possible that the prophet, when he wrote these words, did

[1] Zech. 8:16. The original has "truth and peaceful justice," but the first word is a gloss. For "peaceful" some read "perfect."

[2] Zech. 8:16 f.

not have any thought of the relation between Judah and Persia; but he must have known that the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty was occasioned by the faithlessness of Zedekiah,[1] and he would certainly have said that the relation to Persia which the Jews were obliged to accept when Zerubbabel was eliminated furnished a case in point. When, therefore, he predicted that Jerusalem would one day be famed as "The city of truth,"[2] that is, the faithful city, he may well have included in the virtues of its citizens loyalty to the Great King.[3]

There is another touch that harmonizes with the spirit of submission displayed in these last two chapters. It has already been noted that the justice recommended by Zechariah is described as "peaceful." The introduction of this modifier indicates only less clearly than does the picture of the old men and women sitting in the streets, with troops of boys and girls playing about them,[4] how highly the prophet valued the security that the triumph of Darius brought to all parts of his immense empire. It is not strange, therefore, that, in 8:19, his final injunction is, "Love truth (faithfulness) and peace," that is, Be loyal to Yahweh and all your divinely ordained relations, for the sake of peace and its attendant prosperity.

In view of what has been said it is not difficult to imagine the attitude that Zechariah took with reference to foreigners in general; yet some explanation is necessary. This is due to the fact that, in his first two visions, the prophet is dealing, not with the future,

[1] Ezek. 17:11 ff.
[2] Zech. 8:3.
[3] Isa. 1:21, 26.
[4] Zech. 8:4 f.

but with the past, and borrowing from "the former prophets." Thus in 1:15 he represents Yahweh as "sorely displeased with the nations," because, when he was only "a little displeased" with his people, "they helped forward the affliction." This is the idea of Isa. 10:6 f. and 40:2. See also the "smiths" of 1:21. In both of these passages it is Babylonia, and not Persia, that is the offender, just as in 2:7 it is Babylonia from which the Jews are summoned to escape. The prophet feels the same resentment toward this power that those before him expressed, and dooms to overthrow all the nations that attempt to plunder his people; but he looks for a time when the nations, having ceased from their rapacity, will not only make pilgrimages and bring offerings to Jerusalem, as Haggai predicted, but will "join themselves to Yahweh" and be incorporated with his people. The same thought is expressed in a different way at the very close of Zechariah's book,[1] where he predicts that the days will come when "ten men will take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." The recognition of the brotherhood of mankind in these two passages is all but complete, but, in the first, as in Mic. 4:1 ff.,[2] Jerusalem remains the religious center of the world, and in the second the Jew retains the pre-eminence.

[1] Zech. 8:22. [2] Isa. 2:2 ff.

CHAPTER XXI

THE PRIESTLY NARRATIVE

The attitude of the Hebrews with reference to the records of their past has already been considered. It appeared in the Ephraimite narrative, which proved to be a version of their history written from a more advanced ethical standpoint than the Judean, probably with the idea of making it a more valuable means of instruction in morals and religion. In like manner, after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, they revamped the code of laws that had served them until that time and adapted it to the new demand for the centralization of the worship of Yahweh at Jerusalem. There came a time when these later works also failed to satisfy some, at least, of the Jews of the period, especially the priests. It was among these last that there finally originated a new and carefully pruned outline of the history from Creation to the Exodus, with a fuller account of the latter and the invasion of Canaan, into which was wrought a mass of legislation consisting in part of laws, more or less modified, from the earlier codes, but more largely of new ones, that is, laws not previously presented in such a historical setting, bearing on the Hebrew cultus. This work, commonly called the Priestly narrative (P), or the Priests' Code (PC), must be studied in the light of its origin. It may contain valuable information concerning the ethical development of the Hebrews for the period which it covers, but, from the nature of the case, it will be of far more value

for the one in which it was compiled. It cannot be regarded as, in the modern sense, a historical work, since it is perfectly evident that the material at the disposal of its author or authors has been handled with the utmost freedom, much that was valuable having been discarded because it did not suit the plan or the views that had been adopted, and the rest arranged without much regard to its actual origin in a chronological framework that appears to be entirely artificial. Nevertheless the work has ethical significance. Indeed, one must admit that it reflects a development in some respects more advanced than either of the other narratives.

The ethical character of this narrative appears in its outline of the earliest period; and first, in its omissions, such as the story of the sons of God,[1] and that of the drunkenness of Noah,[2] both of which were doubtless expunged because they were regarded as immoral. There are other similar indications. One of them is found in the genealogy of Gen., chap. 5, in its original form, as preserved in the Samaritan text, in which the figures decrease with greater regularity than in the Massoretic, and according to which, not one (Methuselah), but three (Jered, Methuselah, and Lemech) of the antediluvian patriarchs perished in the Deluge: so that the gradual deterioration of the race and its summary destruction is taught by these figures as well as in the Priestly story of the Flood, where the only offense mentioned is violence.[3]

The Priestly account of the patriarchal period, so far as it has been preserved, is almost entirely without

[1] Gen. 6:1 ff. [2] Gen. 9:20 ff. [3] Gen. 6:11, 13.

positive ethical material. The incidents that give to the Judean narrative its interest and importance, and which, as modified by the Ephraimite narrator, furnish a measure of the progress made from 850 to 750 B.C., are either entirely omitted or reduced to insignificance. Thus, there is no reference to Abraham's (or Isaac's) attempt to protect himself at the risk of his wife's honor, since to a late priest marriage to a half-sister was more abominable than outright falsehood.[1] The reason given for the separation between Abraham and Lot is not that their herdsmen quarreled, but that "the land was not able to bear them."[2] The Priestly version of the story of Hagar ignores the trouble between her and her mistress and represents Ishmael as growing to manhood in his father's family on the best terms with his half-brother.[3] The falsehood told by Sarah, when the angel accused her of laughing, is suppressed, as also the treachery by which Jacob robbed Esau of his birthright and Laban of his property, and the quarrels that resulted. Thus the patriarchs are stripped of their individuality and become little more than so many names in a genealogy; but the suppression of these distinctive incidents in itself shows that the author condemned lying and cheating and that he had the support of the decent people of his day in so doing. On the other hand, when he wrote, there was no sentiment against polygamy, concubinage, or slavery. Consequently he does not attempt to conceal or excuse the fact that, according to tradition, Jacob, as well as Esau, was a polygamist,[4] and that Sarah, Leah, and

[1] Lev. 20:1; Deut. 27:22.
[2] Gen. 13:6.
[3] Gen. 17:20; 25:9.
[4] Gen. 35:23 ff.; 26:34; 28:9.

Rachel all had slaves whom they gave to their respective husbands as concubines.[1]

This is all that can be said to any purpose on the patriarchal period, as outlined by the Priestly narrator. When, however, one consults him on the period of the Exodus, one is overwhelmed with the abundance of the material he has to offer. Most of it is contained in the so-called Law of Holiness, Lev., chaps. 17–26, where many of the laws of the Ephraimite and Deuteronomic codes are reproduced, sometimes without change, but sometimes, also, with important modifications. This Priestly legislation must now be examined and its ethical significance duly considered.

When the legislation of the Priests' Code is compared with the previous attempts to regulate the morals of the Hebrews many differences present themselves.

The prohibition of intercourse with a woman during menstruation, which appears first in Lev. 18:19 and 20:18, but must be older than 500 B.C., was doubtless prompted in great measure by superstition, but the effect would be to check unbridled sensuality.[2]

There is no general restriction on the use of intoxicating drinks, but Lev. 10:9, following Ezek. 44:21, forbids the priests to partake of them when they go to the tabernacle. Here, too, although the motive was a mixed one, the law must have had some influence in promoting general sobriety.

It was required of a priest that he be physically sound. The law was, "No man of the seed of Aaron the priest that hath a blemish shall come nigh to offer

[1] Gen. 16:3; 29:24, 29.

[2] See also Num. 25:6 ff.

the offerings of Yahweh made by fire."[1] It is not strange, therefore, that he was restricted in his choice of a wife, being forbidden to marry either a "profane" woman, that is, a devotee from one of the Canaanite shrines, or one who had been divorced. The high priest could marry only a virgin.[2]

The stress laid upon conjugal loyalty is shown in Num. 5:11 ff., where a test peculiar to this code is ordained for cases in which a husband suspects his wife, but can prove nothing against her. It bears some resemblance to two laws on the same subject, §§ 131 and 132, in the Code of Hammurabi. They read: (§ 131) "If the wife of a man, her husband has accused her, and she has not been caught in lying with another male, she shall swear by God and shall return to her husband." (§ 132) "If a wife of a man on account of another male has had the finger pointed at her, and has not been caught in lying with another male, for her husband she shall plunge into the holy river." The cruel injustice of the second paragraph is evident; but it is no more cruel or unjust than the application of the test of the water of jealousy. If the woman were innocent, she would suffer as keenly in her mind as if she were guilty, and be quite as likely to have the spasms suggested by the ceremony prescribed. This would be the result until it was discovered that the water had no real virtue, and then the use of it would become a farce and anything but a hindrance to conjugal infidelity. In fact, this test is said to have been discontinued toward the end of the first Christian century "because there were too many adulterers." Still, the

[1] Lev. 21:21. [2] Lev. 21:7, 13 f.

law must be regarded as a well-meant, if futile, protest against a great evil.

The law against marriage with near relatives[1] has already been cited. It is interesting, in the first place, as above suggested, as an indication of ethical development among the Hebrews. The Ephraimite narrator, in his version of Abraham's attempt to protect himself by concealing his relation to Sarah, makes him excuse himself by saying that she was his half-sister. When, however, the Priests' Code was compiled, marriage between near relatives was considered incestuous. Hence it was necessary to omit this story. This law also illustrates the academic character of much of the later legislation. It enumerates, expressly or by inference, no fewer than seventeen forms of incest. There is one notable omission: a man is not forbidden to marry his own daughter. Benzinger thinks this must originally have been prohibited, but perhaps, owing to the fact that among the Hebrews, as among other oriental peoples, daughters had pecuniary value, there was little or no danger that this form of incest would become prevalent. A less important oversight is that of the case of the mother's brother's wife, although the father's brother's wife is expressly mentioned.[2] It should be noted that marriage with a niece or a cousin is not forbidden, also that a Jew might marry his deceased wife's sister.[3] On the other hand, when the Priests' Code was compiled, the opposition to levirate marriage, which appears in the Book of Ruth,[4] had become so strong that it was thought best to abolish

[1] Lev. 18:6–18.
[2] Lev. 18:14.
[3] Lev. 18:18.
[4] Ruth 4:6.

this ancient custom.[1] In harmony with this innovation provision was made by which, in case a man died without male issue, his daughter or daughters, if he had one or more, might inherit.[2] It was stipulated, however, that these female heirs must marry within their own tribe to prevent the transfer of land from one tribe to another.

One of the most important changes introduced by the Priests' Code concerns slaves. Both of the earlier codes required that a Hebrew slave be released after six years of service. The Priestly writer, on the other hand, who is careful to prescribe that the bondman be humanely treated, allows him to be held until the year of jubilee, that is, in extreme cases, practically for life. At first sight, this seems retrogressive, but it is not entirely so; since the effect of such a law would naturally be to put an end to the enslavement of Hebrews for debt, and this is evidently its intent, the idea being that only aliens should be bought and sold and serve without wages in the community.[3] It should be added that slaves of the latter class were treated as members of the family, being permitted, if circumcised, to partake of the passover, and, when their masters were priests, of the holy things of the sanctuary.[4]

The treatment of cases involving damages in the Priests' Code is peculiar. It appears in Lev. 19:20–22, where the penalty to be laid upon a man for lying with another's concubine is left indefinite, but the offender is required to "bring his trespass offering to Yahweh, ... even a ram for a trespass offering." A number of other cases of a similar kind are enumerated in Lev. 6:2–7,

[1] Lev. 18:16; 20:21.
[2] Num. 27:8; 36:6.
[3] Lev. 35:45 f.
[4] Exod. 12:44; Lev. 22:11.

where it is provided, not only that the injury done be made good, and a ram be brought for a trespass offering, but that the guilty party pay a fine of "the fifth part" of the value of the thing or things with reference to which loss or damage has been inflicted. The size of the fine, as compared with that imposed for theft in the Ephraimite Code—two for one in the case of animals found alive in the possession of the thief, and four or five for one in that of a sheep or an ox killed or sold[1]—is noticeable; but it should also be noted that, in some cases, the fine as well as the flesh of the ram offered went to the priests.[2]

The prophet Zechariah laid down the principle, "Let none of you devise evil in his heart against his neighbor."[3] If this principle were followed, the most serious ills from which society suffers would of course, be prevented. This principle, however, has never been generally adopted. It is therefore necessary for those who have the good will to ask themselves what should be their attitude toward those of a contrary disposition. The earlier Hebrews were inclined to meet injury with resentment, and, when they were strong enough so to do, with retaliation. The discourses of the prophets are sometimes marred by passages that betray the cruelest hatred. Some of them, like Ezek. 25:12–14, are directed against surrounding nations, who had attacked or opposed the Chosen People, others, like Jer. 20:11 f., against the writer's own personal enemies. The author of Lev. 19:17 f. saw the danger in this spirit, and urged its avoidance. First comes the

[1] Exod. 22:1, 4.

[2] Lev. 5:14–16; II Kings 12:17.

[3] Zech. 8:17.

prohibition, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart." The terms used give no clue to the circumstances under which they were chosen. The next clause, however, is "Thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbor"; which indicates that, when the author forbids hatred, he refers to the resentment kindled by injurious treatment. This becomes still clearer in vs. 18, where he adds, "Thou shalt not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the children of thy people." Finally, he lays down the positive precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," in which he anticipates the teaching of Jesus, where he says, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy, but I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you"[1]; and this is the supreme test of the good will which is the fundamental principle of morality.

In the Ephraimite Code the Hebrew is forbidden to treat another, who has borrowed money of him, as a debtor was usually treated,[2] and in Deuteronomy one is forbidden to take discount on money or produce, that is, to withhold a certain part or percentage of the amount borrowed for the use of the remainder. In Lev. 25:36 f. both discount and interest proper are prohibited as unworthy of the people of Yahweh.

The Priests' Code forbids any charge on loans, but it does not indorse the Deuteronomic provision for the release of Hebrew debtors once in seven years. It has, however, in the year of jubilee, an institution that to some extent serves the same purpose. The law with

[1] Matt. 5:43 f.

[2] Exod. 22:25.

[3] Deut. 23:19.

reference to it provides that land which a man for any reason is obliged to sell shall not be totally alienated,[1] but practically leased, and that, when the year of jubilee arrives, if it is not sooner redeemed, it shall revert to its original owner.[2] So, also, houses in open villages,[3] and those of the Levites in cities of refuge.[4] The theory underlying this law is, that the land belongs to Yahweh,[5] which, being interpreted in terms of modern usage, would mean that it is the property of the tribe or the community. It is clear that the effect of this law, which, so far as can be learned, was never actually put into operation, would have been to prevent one of the most serious evils with which governments in all ages have had to deal, the development of a permanent proletariat.

The law with reference to inheritance in Num. 27:6–11, to which attention has already been called, was distinctly favorable to women, but that concerning vows emphasized their dependence either on their fathers or their husbands. The latter was based on the idea that the daughter was the property of her father and the wife the property of her husband, and that neither of them had a right to enter into any engagement affecting herself, or anything else belonging to her natural protector, against his wishes.

All the codes condemn false oaths, but the Priests' is the only one that expressly forbids lying and deception.[6] Note, also, that in Exod. 6:11 (P) Yahweh directs Moses straightforwardly to demand that Pharaoh "let the children of Israel go out of his land."[7]

[1] Lev. 25:13–17. [2] Lev. 25:24–28. [3] Lev. 25:31.
[4] Lev. 25:32 f. In vs. 33 read "redeem not." [5] Lev. 25:23.
[6] Lev. 19:11b. [7] Cf. Exod. 3:18; 5:3 (J).

All the codes also inculcate respect for parents, but this last goes beyond the others in requiring reverence for the aged.[1] It is peculiar, also, in that it forbids the indignities that thoughtless persons, especially children, are apt to inflict upon the unfortunate. An example in point is that of the boys who annoyed Elisha as he went up from Jericho.[2] The offenses here mentioned are cursing the deaf and putting stumbling-blocks in the way of the blind.[3]

The attitude of this code toward sojourners and foreigners assorts with the circumstances under which it was compiled. These classes are not only protected by it from wrong and violence, but commended to the positive kindness of the Hebrew community. "The stranger that sojourneth with you," it says, "shall be to you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself."[4] If he is needy, it gives him the same claim upon the charity of his neighbors as the native Hebrew, and if he at any time wishes to enjoy full religious privileges, he has only to submit to circumcision, when he becomes to all intents and purposes a Hebrew.

Intermarriage with these proselytes would, of course, be permitted. Indeed, there is no express prohibition in this code to prevent Jews from taking as wives or husbands foreigners not resident among them. This being the case, it seems strange that Ezra, who, according to Neh., chap. 8, was chiefly instrumental in procuring the adoption of the Priests' Code, and Nehemiah, his co-worker, should be represented as

[1] Lev. 19:32.
[2] II Kings 2:23 ff.
[3] Lev. 19:14.
[4] Lev. 19:34.

uncompromisingly opposed to such marriages. The discrepancy can be removed by supposing, as many do, that the law promulgated by Ezra and Nehemiah in 444 B.C. was not the Priests' Code alone, but the Pentateuch in substantially its present form, including Deuteronomy, in which marriages with Canaanites are distinctly prohibited, and to which Ezra 9:11 f. has evident reference.[1]

The Priests' Code, or rather, the Law of Holiness, marks a new stage in the development of ethics among the Hebrews. There had, for a long time, been an open breach between the priests and the prophets, the former naturally laying stress upon ceremonial observances, while the latter insisted that Yahweh required, first of all, exclusive devotion to himself, and next, habitual acquiescence in the demands of the ideal human life. The overthrow, one after the other, of both Hebrew kingdoms taught the survivors to acknowledge the importance of the ethical in religion. The priests themselves admitted it, but they could not sacrifice the religious observances that they had inherited from the past. The Law of Holiness is an attempt to combine the ethical with the ceremonial in religion, doing justice to both elements. Yahweh is holy, and he requires that man also, in his sphere, be holy. What this means appears from the various passages in which the requirement is reiterated. According to Lev. 19:2 ff. it forbids marriages between near relatives; according to 20:2–6, the sacrifice of children to Moloch, or the patronage of alien diviners; and, according to 20:25 f., the neglect of the distinction between clean

[1] Deut. 7:1, 3; 11:8; 23:7.

and unclean animals. The first of these passages represents the precepts among which, as has been shown, are some of the most lofty to be found in the Old Testament. Indeed, when Jesus, on being asked which was the first of the commandments, cited Deut. 6:4 f., he immediately added that the second was the comprehensive moral precept in Lev. 19:18b, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[1] Jesus, however, would not have indorsed the Law of Holiness as a whole, in spite of the excellence of its morality; nor would any of the great prophets, because the priests, who, in Jer. 33:14 ff., attached to a messianic passage a prediction of the perpetuity of their order, in this case placed the externals of religion on an equality with morality, thus producing a system, later supplemented by the new requirements of the completed Priests' Code, which, as Peter said, proved "a yoke" that the Jews were never "able to bear."[2]

[1] Mark 12:28 ff. [2] Acts 15:10.

CHAPTER XXII

THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH CHAPS. 56–66, AND RELATED PASSAGES IN ISAIAH AND OTHER PROPHETICAL BOOKS

The righteousness of Yahweh is as prominent in these as in the preceding sixteen chapters. In Isa. 61:8 he declares that he loves justice. The term, however, here as in chaps. 40–55, generally has reference to the intervention of Yahweh in behalf of his people. Thus, in 56:1 he announces, that his "salvation is near to come," and his "righteousness to be revealed." It did not come as soon as the more hopeful expected. Indeed, it was so long delayed that one could say, "Justice is far from us, neither doth righteousness overtake us";[1] "We look for justice, but there is none, for salvation, but it is far from us";[2] and "Justice is turned away backward, and righteousness standeth afar off."[3] The author of these passages, however, did not lose hope. He sees Yahweh preparing to come with retribution. "Yahweh saw it," he says, "and it displeased him that there was no justice; . . . . therefore his own arm brought salvation to them, and his righteousness upheld him. And he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on garments of vengeance, and was clad with zeal as with a mantle."[4] When his retributive work is ended those "that mourn in Zion"

[1] Isa. 59:9.
[2] Isa. 59:11.
[3] Isa. 59:14.
[4] Isa. 59:15b–17; cf. 66:16.

will be called "trees of righteousness," in whom he will be glorified.[1] They will be clothed with "the garments of salvation," and covered with "the robe of righteousness." "So will the Lord Yahweh cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations."[2] In 62:11 there is another prediction of the approach of the great day, and in 63:1 ff. a still more vivid vision of the appearance of Yahweh, who speaks "in righteousness, mighty to save."

In all this there is nothing new; but one has only to read these chapters as a whole to find that the righteousness of Yahweh here has a different background from that of chaps. 40–55. In chaps. 40–55 the Jews are in exile, and, because they have suffered enough and more than enough, Yahweh in his righteousness purposes to punish those who have overdone the task of chastising them and restore the sufferers to their heritage. Here the case is different. The scene is laid in Jerusalem. The good that the people desire is therefore, not deliverance from bondage, but the restoration of prosperity. The prophet, however, tells them in the very first verse that they can claim this blessing only on condition that they "keep justice" and "work righteousness."[3] In chap. 59 he declares that the delay in the return of prosperity is due to their failure to fulfil this condition. He says of them, "The way of peace they know not, and there is no justice in their goings";[4] and further, "Truth is fallen in the street, and righteousness cannot enter."[5] Meanwhile "the righteous perisheth";[6] that is, some who are

[1] Isa. 61:3.
[2] Isa. 61:10 f.
[3] Isa. 56:1.
[4] Vs. 9.
[5] Vs. 14.
[6] Isa. 57:1.

really worthy of the divine favor have to suffer with their unworthy fellows. The latter affect surprise that they should not be recognized as righteous. Thereupon the prophet holds the mirror of the moral law up to them and their lives. In the first place, according to 57:3 ff., some of them have been guilty of disloyalty to Yahweh in paying homage to other gods. This sort of "righteousness," he tells them,[1] cannot profit. There is another kind in which many are inclined to boast, but in which Yahweh takes no delight. It is the righteousness of those that seek God daily in the service of the temple and ask "righteous judgments," that is, go to the priests, as did the people of Bethel,[2] or to the Law in search of knowledge concerning religious observances. Being so zealous, they consider themselves a people characterized by righteousness, and wonder that Yahweh takes no knowledge of them.[3] The prophet answers their complaint substantially as did Zechariah the question of the Bethelites.[4] The passage puts the relative value of the ceremonial and the ethical in religion so clearly and strongly that it deserves to be quoted almost entire: "Behold," it makes Yahweh say, "ye fast for strife and contention, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. . . . . Is such the fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? . . . . Wilt thou call this a fast, and a day acceptable to Yahweh? Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to

[1] Isa. 57:12.
[2] Zech. 7:1 ff.
[3] Isa. 58:2 f.
[4] Isa. 58:4 ff.

deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" When they learn to observe this form of self-denial, the prophet assures them, their righteousness will go before them and the glory of Yahweh will be their rearward. He looks forward to the time when tyrants and oppressors will become patrons of righteousness,[1] and all the people follow their direction.[2] Having thus shown his people their real condition in the eyes of Yahweh, it is natural that, in the prayer in which he voices their longings,[3] the prophet should entreat Yahweh to "meet those who work righteousness,"[4] yet confess that such righteousness as they have is "as a polluted garment."[5]

The justice, or righteousness, required by Yahweh, which in 59:14 f. is called truth, or loyalty, according to the author, or authors, of these chapters, forbids all abusive speech and oppressive action and requires all forms of charity.[6] He, or they, would doubtless have said that it excluded anything else that is elsewhere condemned like intemperance,[7] covetousness,[8] and falsehood,[9] and included everything that is approved, as, for example, humility.[10] It would not, however, apparently, have been thought inconsistent with intense satisfaction in the prospect of seeing those who were accounted enemies or persecutors overtaken by the

[1] Isa. 60:17.
[2] Isa. 60:21.
[3] Isa. 63:15—64:12.
[4] Isa. 64:5.
[5] Isa. 64:6.
[6] Isa. 58:6 f., 9 f.; see also 57:1; 59:3, 6, 13; 60:18; 61:1, 8.
[7] Isa. 56:12.
[8] Isa. 56:11; 57:17.
[9] Isa. 59:3 f., 13.
[10] Isa. 57:15; 61:1; 66:2.

most speedy and violent destruction.[1] Some of these are foreigners, but they are not condemned on that account. Indeed, these chapters are more favorable to foreigners than almost any other part of the Old Testament. Thus, in 56:3 the foreigner is assured that there is no reason why he should say to himself, "Yahweh will entirely separate me from his people," and in vs. 8 the promise there implied is put into more positive and definite language. These foreigners, however, must "join themselves to Yahweh," become proselytes to the Jewish religion; "serve[2] him," worship him as they have opportunity and observe his commandments; and "love the name of Yahweh," openly profess devotion to him. There are two special requirements: observance of the Sabbath and loyalty to the covenant of Yahweh. "Them," says Yahweh, "will I bring to my holy mountain," the site of the temple, "and grant them to rejoice in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar." Then follows the general announcement and invitation, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

In the passages thus far cited foreigners are recognized as equals entitled to the same regard and the same privileges as Hebrews. It seems, however, to have been difficult for the author, or authors, of these chapters to maintain this liberal attitude. At any rate, in some places foreigners take an inferior relation. Thus, in 60:10 ff., they come from all directions, bringing "their silver and their gold with them." They build up the

[1] Isa. 57:20; 59:18; 63:1 ff.; 65:11 f.; 66:15 ff., 24.

[2] English, "minister to."

walls of Zion, whose gates remain "open continually," "that men may bring . . . . the wealth of the nations and their kings led captive." Those that have hitherto afflicted her will "come bending" to her, and those that have despised her will "bow themselves down at the soles of her feet." The climax is reached in 61:5 f., where the prophet predicts that "strangers shall stand and feed" the flocks of the Jews, and foreigners be their "plowmen and vinedressers." "But ye," he says, "shall be named the priests of Yahweh; men shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their riches shall ye glory." Naturally, "that nation and that kingdom that will not serve" the Chosen People must "perish."[1] The first verses of chap. 63 give a vivid apocalyptic picture of the destruction of these rebellious gentiles, "Edom," if this is the correct reading,[2] representing the hostile foreign world.[3] The national pride of the Jews is here strongly in evidence; but the discrepancy between these passages and 56:6–8 is not greater than that between 49:22 f. and the passages that deal with the Servant in chaps. 40–55. It must also be remembered that at the time when chaps. 56–66 were written there were doubtless some who would not have admitted foreigners even to a subordinate place among them.

It remains to call attention to another indication of liberality in the author, or authors, of these chapters. In Deut. 23:1, it will be remembered, the eunuch is

[1] Isa. 60:12.

[2] Lagarde and others render vs. 1, "Who is this that cometh all red, with garments redder than the vintner's?"

[3] Ezek. 38 f.; Zech. 14:1 ff.

denied admission to the assembly of Yahweh.[1] In Isa. 56:3–5 there is a special message for this class. The eunuch is not to think of himself as "a dry tree," which, in most cases, he was in a physical sense, since Yahweh will give him in his (Yahweh's) house "a memorial and a name better than" the possession of any number of "sons and daughters," the only conditions being those imposed upon other worshipers, observance of the Sabbath, obedience to the will of Yahweh, and loyalty to his covenant. This concession may not have been prompted by unmixed charity, since some of the eunuchs with whom the author was acquainted must have been men of wealth and influence.

The righteousness of Yahweh is among the doctrines taught in the briefer additions made to the prophetical books in the course of their history. Thus, in Isa. 30:18 he is in so many words declared to be "a God of justice." In Isa. 3:10 f. the righteousness of his government is put into the form of a proverb:

> Blessed is the righteous, for it shall be well with him;
> For the fruit of his deeds shall he eat.
> Woe to the godless! it shall be ill with him;
> For what his hands have wrought shall be repaid him.[2]

The pious Jew took refuge in this doctrine when hard pressed by circumstances. Thus, in Mic. 7:9, an unknown glossator, who evidently spoke for his people as well as himself, says: "I will bear the indignation of Yahweh, because I have sinned against him; until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me. He will bring me forth to the light, I shall behold his

[1] See also Lev. 21:20. [2] Similarly Isa. 26:7 f.

righteousness." In this passage there is a hint of the pedagogic value of affliction. This idea is more clearly brought out in two or three others. Thus, in Isa. 26:9 it is put into the proverbial form, "When thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness." In Isa. 19:22 an example is given, "Yahweh will smite Egypt, smiting and healing." In Jer. 30:11, one of the passages by the addition of which later readers sought to mitigate the sternness of the prophet's denunciations, Yahweh is made to say, "I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in justice, and not leave thee wholly unpunished."

The moral sovereignty of Yahweh, as the later Jews conceived it, is most frequently presented in apocalyptic predictions of the deliverance of the remnant of Israel by the overthrow and subjugation of the gentile world. For example, in Isa. 10:22 f. one reads of a destruction "determined, overflowing with righteousness," which "Yahweh will make in the midst of all the earth." In like manner it is predicted in Isa. 29:17 ff. that "the terrible one" will be "brought to nought," and "the scoffer" cease, and "all they that watch for iniquity" be cut off.[1] The apocalyptic idea is more fully developed in Isa., chaps. 24–27. The author of these chapters begins with a description of the desolation wrought in the earth by Yahweh, who "maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth its inhabitants,"[2] "because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant."[3] In all this there is "glory to

[1] See also Jer. 30:23 f.; Mic. 5:15.

[2] Isa. 24:1.

[3] Isa. 24:5.

the righteous,"[1] but punishment for "the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth on the earth."[2] In Isa., chaps. 34 f. there is an even more terrible picture of the "day of vengeance," the "year of recompense for the cause of Zion,"[3] in prospect of which God's people are exhorted to "be strong, fear not." "Behold," says the prophet, "your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will come to save you."[4] In Jer., chap. 10, Yahweh, who is called "King of the nations,"[5] is entreated to "pour out his wrath upon the nations" that know him not, "because they have devoured Jacob, and consumed him, and laid waste his habitation."

The later chapters of Zechariah contain vivid descriptions of the intervention of Yahweh in behalf of his people. Thus, 9:14 f. assures them that Yahweh "will appear above them, and his arrow go forth like lightning," as he comes with resounding triumph "in the tempests of the South" to protect them; and 12:4 that he "will smite every horse with terror, and its rider with madness"; while 14:12–15 describes with horrible detail the plague by which he will punish "all the peoples that have served against Jerusalem."

These apocalyptic pieces remind one of the later Deuteronomic literature. There is the same narrowness and the same tenderness in certain directions, with the most implacable hostility toward all outside given limits. What could be more comforting and inspiring than Isa. 35:8–10? Yet the author is presumably the same who, in chap. 34, describes the havoc

[1] Isa. 24:6.
[2] Isa. 24:21.
[3] Isa. 34:8.
[4] Isa. 35:4.
[5] Jer. 10:7.

made by the divine wrath with a gusto that is revolting. Of the offending nations he says, vs. 3, "Their slain, also, shall be cast out, and the stench of their corpses shall arise, and the mountains shall flow with their blood." He is particularly severe on Edom, of which he predicts, vss. 9 f., that "the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone; and the land thereof shall become pitch, burning day and night; it shall not be quenched for ever; the smoke thereof shall go up from generation to generation: it shall lie waste for ever; none shall pass through it." These are only samples of the horrors depicted. They can only have been invented and described by someone so bigoted that he had become blind to moral distinctions, or so isolated in his experience that he did not know the meaning of his own language.

The ethical as well as the religious standpoint in these prophecies is naturally the law of Yahweh. Thus, as already noted, the earth is cursed because its inhabitants "have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant." The ideal condition for the Holy Land and its people, therefore, is one in which "the deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see without obscurity and without darkness,"[1] or better, when the "Teacher will not be hidden any more," but the eyes of his people will see him, and their ears "hear a voice behind them, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it," if they are in danger of going astray.[2]

In the good time coming the greatest of the virtues will be justice based on the divine law. It is one of the

[1] Isa. 29:18. [2] Isa. 30:20 f.

three by which the Ideal King will be characterized, for his throne is to be "established in kindness," and he is to "sit thereon in truth (faithfulness) in the tent of David, judging and seeking justice, and swift to work righteousness." See Isa. 16:5; also 32:1. "Then justice shall dwell in the desert, and righteousness in the fruitful field; and the result of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quiet and confidence for ever."[1]

The capital will, naturally, be prominent, for "Yahweh will fill Zion with justice and righteousness,"[2] so that it will again, and justly, be called a "habitation of righteousness."[3] The citizen of the new Jerusalem will, in his measure, represent the righteousness of the city. He is described in Isa. 33:15 as "he that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hand from taking a tribe, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from looking upon evil." Here, perhaps, belongs Hos. 12:6, where justice is one of the conditions of the divine favor.

In one of the passages just cited, Isa. 33:15, there is implied condemnation of a class of persons who do the things that they ought to despise and eschew, and in 32:6 ff. the author names two classes, fools and knaves, from whom nothing but evil can be expected; but there is in these pieces little of the criticism of Jewish morals that abounds in the genuine portions of the books to which they have been added. Indeed, the tendency is to idealize Israel, as in Isa. 26:2, where they

[1] Isa. 32:16 f.; Zech. 9:9 f.

[2] Isa. 33:5.

[3] Jer. 31:23.

are described as "the righteous nation that keepeth faith," and in 26:7 whence it appears that they are individually just and upright. The unrighteous, as compared with them, are, of course, the foreign peoples that have oppressed them.

The second of the cardinal virtues recommended by the prophetic pieces now under consideration is kindness. It, also, is one of the characteristics of the Ideal King of Isa. 16:5.[1] The fool, or knave, of Isa. 32:5 is condemned for lack of kindness to the hungry and thirsty, that is, to the unfortunate of all classes.

Finally, the ethics of these pieces requires truth, both in the sense of adherence to fact and reality and in that of fidelity to obligation. In Isa. 33:15 the man who passes the test of "everlasting burnings" must speak uprightly. The coming king will sit on his throne "in truth," that is, display in his administration perfect loyalty to the law of God, in accordance with which it is his duty to govern; and his people will be known and honored as the "nation that knoweth truth." Cf. Isa. 24:16 and 33:1, where the foreign oppressor is accused of treachery.

In the preceding survey it has not been possible to discuss the ideas of the Hebrews concerning their relations with one another without reference to their attitude toward foreigners. That attitude, so far as it has shown itself, seems to have been consistently hostile. There are other passages that strengthen this impression, especially the repeated denunciations of Edom in Amos 1:11 f.; Isa. 11:14; 34:5 ff. (to parts of which references have already been made); Jer.

[1] See also Hos. 12:6.

49:7 ff. The other peoples against which more or less unfriendly oracles have been inserted into older collections are Sidon,[1] Egypt,[2] Moab,[3] Ammon,[4] Damascus,[5] Kedar,[6] and Elam.[7]

Over against these hostile passages must be placed a series similar to some that were found in Isa., chaps. 40–66. The first to be cited is Isa. 2:2–4, or the more complete version of the prophecy in Mic. 4:1–4. Here Jerusalem is the universal shrine, to which the nations gladly repair, that they may learn of Yahweh and obey his precepts. He thus becomes an arbiter among them, and, since they can trust him to do them all justice, they beat their arms into implements of husbandry and "learn war no more."[8] In Isa. 19:18 ff. there is a remarkable departure from the teaching of Mic. 4:1 ff.; for this passage, instead of requiring all nations to recognize Jerusalem as their religious capital, authorizes the erection of "an altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt,"[9] not only for the convenience of the Jews there settled, but as a place of worship and sacrifice for the Egyptians.[10] This temple, however, was not to interfere with the divine purpose to bring about the union of the nations. The author foresaw a time when Yahweh could say, "Blessed be Egypt, my people, and Assyria, the work of my hands, and Israel, my inheritance."[11] The extreme of liberality seems to have been reached in a passage attached to the oracle on Sidon

[1] Tyre, Isa. 23.
[2] Jer., chap. 46.
[3] Jer., chap. 48.
[4] Jer. 49:1–6.
[5] Jer. 49:23–27.
[6] Jer. 49:28–33.
[7] Jer. 49:34–39.
[8] See also Isa. 18:7; Jer. 3:17; Mic. 5:10–14; Zech. 9:7; 14:16 ff.
[9] Isa. 19:19.
[10] Isa. 19:21.
[11] Isa. 19:25.

(Tyre) in 23:15–18. Here Tyre is promised a restoration after seventy years, with permission again to "play the harlot with all the kingdoms of the world," but her "hire" is to be dedicated to Yahweh, that his priests may "eat sufficiently" and wear "elegant clothing." These words cannot, of course, be taken in their most obvious sense, but harlotry must here be interpreted as a figure for commerce and the whole as a prediction that Tyre will one day contribute, and liberally, to the maintenance of the temple at Jerusalem and the priestly nation ordained to serve at that sanctuary.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE PROPHECIES OF OBADIAH AND MALACHI

These two books were written about the same time, between 475 and 450 B.C., but there is little similarity between them.

1. OBADIAH

The brief prophecy of Obadiah has for its subject punishment of the Edomites for their conduct when Jerusalem was captured and the Jews carried into captivity by the Babylonians. At that time the Edomites not only rejoiced over the misfortunes of their neighbors, but, according to vss. 10 and 13 f., actually added to them by looting the city and putting to death those who had escaped from it. These unneighborly acts were long remembered by the Jews, and always with the bitterest resentment.[1] Obadiah finds in a similar calamity that has overtaken Edom, or is impending, a penalty for its former ruthlessness. "As thou hast done," he says, "it shall be done unto thee; thy recompense shall return upon thy head."[2] This would, no doubt, be but justice under ordinary circumstances; but, in judging the Edomites, one must take into account the suffering that they endured in earlier times from the hands of the Hebrews.[3]

[1] Amos 1:11 ff.; Isa. 34:5 ff.; Jer. 49:7 ff.; Ezek. 35:1 ff.; Mic. 1:2 ff.

[2] Vs. 15b.

[3] II Sam. 8:14; I Kings 22:47; II Kings 8:21.

2. MALACHI

When the books of Obadiah and Malachi were written the temple had long been rebuilt and the worship of Yahweh therein restored, but the moral and religious condition of the Jews was far from satisfactory. The requirements of morality were widely disregarded, and many good people were in danger of losing their faith in the righteousness of the divine government. They said openly: "Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of Yahweh, and he delighteth in them"—that is, it seems to make no difference whether one does good or evil; "where, then, is the God of justice?"[1] The same complaint is put into other words in Mal. 3:14 f., where those who fear Yahweh are represented as saying: "It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have walked mournfully before Yahweh of Hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness have been prospered, they have even tempted God and escaped." The prophet does not share this skepticism. Whatever others may say, he knows that Yahweh takes note of the ways of men, and keeps "a book of remembrance,"[2] and that, when the day comes for him to claim his own, he will see that no one fails to "discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."[3] To those that fear his name "shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings."[4] Meanwhile they are exhorted to "remember the law of Moses," and observe its "statutes and ordinances";[5] this law, as can easily be shown, being that of Deuter-

[1] Mal. 2:17. [3] Mal. 3:18. [5] Mal. 4:4.
[2] Mal. 3:16. [4] Mal. 4:2.

onomy, although the teaching of the prophet himself is not always in harmony with it.

There is, for example, a noticeable discrepancy between the law and this prophet on the subject of marriage. They both, of course, condemn adultery without reservation; but they differ with reference to divorce. In Deuteronomy, it will be remembered, a man is permitted to put away his wife "if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her," provided he gives her "a bill of divorcement."[1] It seems to have been a common practice, when the Book of Malachi was written, for men to take advantage of this law, and dismiss their wives when they became old and no longer attractive. The prophet protests against this practice, warning his people lest any "deal treacherously against the wife of his youth," because Yahweh hates "putting away."[2] There is a new note in this passage. In the references to marriage it has thus far been viewed as a commercial transaction. The husband bought his wife of her father and she became his property, to keep or discard, as he was moved by passion or interest. Here marriage suddenly becomes a covenant, with Yahweh himself as a witness, and divorce the violation of a covenant with an equal, even a "companion" from youth. This is a great step, really anticipating the verdict of Jesus when he was approached on the subject, "What God hath joined let not man put asunder."[3]

In the field of social ethics the author of this book had to face some of the evils that had been condemned by the earlier prophets. In Mal. 3:5 he enumerates

[1] Deut. 24:1 ff. [2] Mal. 2:15 f. [3] Matt. 19:6.

the most flagrant offenses of his time. Besides sorcery and adultery there are false swearing and the oppression of the unfortunate, the hireling, the widow, and the orphan, for any of which those who are guilty of it may expect at any moment to be overtaken by retribution. The prophet does not set social duties over against ceremonial observances, as do some of his predecessors, but he criticizes very severely both the priests and the people for the way in which they treat the requirements of their religion. The priests in the temple offer polluted bread and animals that are blind, lame, or sick, thinking to win the favor of their God with offerings that their earthly ruler would reject with contempt.[1] The people also attempt to cheat Yahweh by paying their vows in blemished animals,[2] or rob him by withholding their tithes and offerings.[3] The priests are also accused of having fallen so far below the standard of truth and righteousness set by their fathers that they have not only themselves "turned aside out of the way," but "caused many" others "to stumble in the law," and thus "violated the covenant of Levi."[4] The particular offense laid to their charge is that they "have had respect of persons in the law," that is, have shown partiality in the administration of justice, an abuse that is expressly forbidden in the Deuteronomic Code.[5] Thus they have not only wrought injustice toward those who had a right to expect from them the contrary, but broken a covenant with him by whom they were intrusted with their judicial functions.

[1] Mal. 1:7 f.; also vs. 13.
[2] Mal. 1:14.
[3] Mal. 3:8.
[4] Mal. 2:8; Deut. 33:10.
[5] Deut. 16:19; 24:17.

It remains to examine the attitude of the author of Malachi toward foreigners. This topic seems, at first sight, to be covered, and in a most satisfactory way, by 2:10. "Have we not," says the prophet, "all one father? hath not one God created us?" but when one takes this passage with its context one finds that the prophet is speaking of the relation, not of one man, but of one Jew, to another. He does, however, in an earlier passage (1:10 f.) make quite as notable a declaration as this would be if it could be given a universal interpretation. It follows his criticism of the priests for the character of their offerings, concerning which he makes Yahweh say, "I have no pleasure in you, ... neither will I accept an offering at your hands." Then comes a statement that loses much of its significance in the English Version. It should read, "For from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof my name is (not "shall be") great among the gentiles, and in every place is offered to my name a pure offering; for my name is great among the gentiles, saith Yahweh of Hosts." This cannot be interpreted as referring to the worship of Jews in various parts of the earth, but must be understood as a declaration that Yahweh sees in the blind religious gropings of foreign peoples attempts to reach him that are more acceptable than the half-hearted or hypocritical service of his own people. There is nothing finer than this, in its sympathy for, and recognition of, the gentile world, in the Old Testament; for even the great prophet of the Exile seems not to have been able to see any salvation for other peoples except in the acceptance of the Jewish religion.[1] Indeed,

[1] Isa. 49:22.

it was some time before the disciples of Jesus were able to say with Peter, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that worketh righteousness is accepted of him."[1]

There are two passages in the Book of Malachi that have been cited as conflicting with the teaching of the one just quoted. One of them is 1:2 ff., where the prophet describes Edom as "the people against whom Yahweh hath indignation for ever." It is clear, however, that resentment against a given people for injuries received is not inconsistent with the most fraternal attitude toward foreigners as such, especially the sincerely devout among them.

The second passage, 2:11 f., admits of no such explanation; for it cannot be denied that the statement that Judah "hath married the daughter of a foreign God" carries with it condemnation of intermarriage between Jews and gentiles, and that this sentiment is contrary to that of 1:11. Such being the case, it is necessary to admit that the prophet was, after all, not a thoroughgoing universalist, or suppose, with Marti, that the troublesome passage is an interpolation.

[1] Acts 10:34 f.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BOOK OF RUTH

If the author of the Book of Malachi, in spite of the revelation vouchsafed him, shrank from subjecting the religion of Yahweh to the test of intimate intercourse with other peoples, there were those in his day who were more consistently liberal in their attitude, doubtless, for one reason, because they saw in some foreigners as fine examples of manhood and womanhood as Judaism was producing. Among them was the author of the Book of Ruth. At any rate, this book has the force of a protest against an exclusiveness which sometimes shows itself in the earlier literature, but becomes noticeable in Deuteronomy and seems to have become more pronounced in the two following centuries.

The story, which is too familiar to require rehearsal, incidentally alludes to the subject of levirate marriage. This custom is first mentioned in Gen. 38:8 ff., from which it appears that the brother, or the next relative, of a man who had died leaving a widow, but no children, was expected to marry the woman and "raise up seed" to the deceased. In Deut. 25:5 ff. this obligation is somewhat restricted and a ceremony prescribed in case the surviving relative wished to be released from fulfilling it. In the Book of Ruth the object made prominent in the Deuteronomic law is overshadowed by the desire of Naomi to provide a home for her daughter-in-law. Then, too, in the sequel, the child born to Ruth is reckoned a son, not of Chilion, but of Boaz,

her second husband. All this, however, is of secondary importance. The lesson of the book is found in the fact that Ruth is not of Hebrew but of Moabite origin; that she is represented as in every respect an admirable character; and that, by her marriage with Boaz she becomes an ancestress, great-grandmother, of the national hero, David. It should also be noted that the author takes pains in 4:12 to refer to Tamar, the Canaanite mother of the tribe of Judah. He could hardly have testified more clearly to the total absence in him of prejudice against foreigners.

There are two minor points that should not be overlooked. The first has reference to a feature of the character of Ruth, her loyalty to her mother-in-law as expressed in the classic passage: "Entreat me not to leave thee, and return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried; Yahweh do so to me, and more also, if aught but death shall part thee and me."[1] The second point relates to the character of Boaz. He is an ideal Hebrew: dignified, but genial; honorable and considerate in his dealings even with the lowliest; and generous toward all who need his sympathy or assistance.

[1] Ruth 1:16 f.

CHAPTER XXV

THE BOOK OF JOB

The importance of the Book of Job in any discussion of the ethics of the Old Testament cannot be overestimated, since, as will appear, it shows how deeply the Hebrews thought on the subject of moral obligation, and how high, at the highest, was their standard of virtue.

The book, however, as already intimated, is not strictly a unit. In the first place, one must distinguish between the framework, in simple prose, and the poetical interchange in which the theme suggested by the prologue is discussed. The most plausible theory with reference to the former is that it was based on a folk-tale to which there are references in Ezek. 14:14, 20. On this supposition the ethical teaching of the framework should be comparatively simple; and so it is. Thus, Job is introduced as "perfect and upright,"[1] and the reader is allowed to infer that his prosperity is due to the excellence of his character. This is assumed when Yahweh commends him to the attention of the Adversary, and the latter declares that he practices the virtues attributed to him only for the sake of the reward that Yahweh has attached to them.[2] Job, by his conduct under affliction, refutes this accusation. He makes no claim upon Yahweh, but regards the blessings he has enjoyed, even after they have been withdrawn, as divine favors for which he cannot but be thankful.[3] "In all this," says the narrator, "Job sinned not; nor did he

[1] Job 1:1. [2] Job 1:10 f. [3] Job 1:21; 2:10.

ascribe to God anything unseemly."[1] It does not appear just what, according to the original story, his friends said to him or what he replied; but it is clear from 42:7 that, although they unintentionally played into the hands of the Adversary, he did not change his position. The Adversary, therefore, was disappointed and his victim vindicated. Finally, Yahweh testified his approval of Job, not only by rebuking his friends for their attempts to instruct him,[2] but by reversing his fortunes and blessing his "latter end" "more than his beginning."[3] The teaching of the story, therefore, is that, while men should not serve God and practice virtue for the sake of personal advantage, the good may, except when God for some wise reason ordains otherwise, expect to enjoy a richer portion of the things that make for happiness than the bad in the present life.

The poetical part of the book consists of a disputation between Job and four others,[4] followed by three speeches by Yahweh and two very brief sections in which Job makes his submission.[5] The unity of these chapters is a subject on which there is difference of opinion, the majority of recent critics denying the genuineness of the Elihu speeches, while some, like Duhm, claim to have discovered other more or less extended interpolations. The most important, from the ethical point of view, of these suspected passages is chap. 24; but the omission of both this and chaps. 32–37 will but slightly affect the result of the present investigation. For a more detailed statement, see the end of this chapter.

[1] Job 1:22. [3] Job 42:10, 12. [5] Job 38:1—42:6.
[2] Job 42:7. [4] Job, chaps. 3–37.

The discussion in chaps. 3–31 is brought on by Job, who, according to the author, instead of accepting his misfortunes in silence, or, as in the original legend, defending Yahweh against his wife, breaks into an impassioned lament in which he curses the day of his birth, declares that the dead alone are happy, and complains that he himself cannot "find the grave."[1] He does not, however, here seek a reason for his sufferings; much less does he accuse God of injustice for permitting him to be afflicted. It is his friends who undertake to explain why he suffers; also how, and how only, he can find relief.

Their first spokesman is Eliphaz, the Temanite. He begins by giving Job credit for fear of God[2] and suggesting that, as a man of integrity, he has a right in due time to expect again to enjoy the divine favor.[3] He finds ground for this comforting suggestion in human experience, the result of which he puts into a rhetorical question,

> Who that was innocent hath perished?
> And where have the upright been destroyed?[4]

This is precisely the teaching of the earlier books of the Old Testament, according to which the righteous are rewarded for their righteousness in time. They also teach that the wicked are punished for their wickedness this side the grave; which Eliphaz puts into the words,

> They that plow iniquity,
> And sow trouble, reap it;
> By the breath of God they perish,
> And by the blast of his anger are they consumed.[5]

[1] Job 3:1 ff. [3] Job 4:6. [5] Job 4:8 f.
[2] Job 4:2. [4] Job 4:7.

There are, he admits, apparent exceptions, a "foolish" person who prospers or a righteous who suffers; but he finds no difficulty in explaining such cases. The prosperity of the wicked is but temporary. Again he appeals to experience:

> I have seen the foolish taking root;
> But his dwelling suddenly mouldered.[1]

As for the righteous who suffer, they should regard their sufferings as disciplinary, and comfort themselves with the reflection that he who "maketh sore" "bindeth up,"[2] and that finally they will come to their graves

> in vigor,
> As a shock of grain is brought home in its season.[3]

Job finds no comfort in the speech of Eliphaz. Indeed, he declares that his friends have disappointed him, like the brook that overflows in winter, when no one is looking for water, but runs dry in summer, when the thirsty seek it for refreshment.[4] He invites them, instead of reproving him for complaining at his lot, to show him wherein he has deserved it.[5] This does not imply that he thinks himself without fault. He more than once, in the course of his successive speeches, admits that he is not perfect. He does not, however, admit that he has intentionally neglected any known duty to God or man. This passage, therefore, is naturally interpreted as one of those in which he asserts his integrity over against the inferences of his friends. It is the evident intention of the poet to represent his hero as holding that loyalty to every known obligation

[1] Job 5:3. [3] Job 5:26. [5] Job 6:24 ff.
[2] Job 5:25. [4] Job 6:15 ff.

ought, if God is really a moral governor, to win his favor. But what of the involuntary trespasses which the best of men are liable to commit? The Law made provision for such cases, prescribing a sacrifice by which the priest should make atonement for the offender;[1] and Job himself, according to 1:5, was accustomed to make similar offerings for his children after their feasts, lest they should have "sinned and blasphemed God in their hearts." It is not strange, therefore, to find that he here objects to being watched like "a dragon"[2] and examined "every moment,"[3] as his friends would have him believe, and having to suffer as he is suffering for unavoidable lapses from the divine standard. He protests,

> If I have sinned, ...
> Why dost thou not pardon my transgression,
> And remove my iniquity?

He adds what shows that, thus far at least, he has had no thought of reward or penalty in a future life,

> For now I shall lie down in the dust,
> And, if thou seek me, I shall be gone.[4]

Which means that, unless God speedily intervenes to rescue him, it will be too late.

Bildad, the Shuhite, when he comes to speak, adds nothing material to the discussion. He rebukes Job for questioning the justice of God, but assures him that, although his children have been destroyed for their transgressions, he may, by "supplication to the Almighty," if he is really "pure and upright,"

[1] Num. 15:27 ff.
[2] Job 7:12.
[3] Job 7:18.
[4] Job 7:20 f.

again rejoice in prosperity.[1] He closes with the contrasted statement,

> Lo, God will not reject a perfect man;
> Neither will he lay hold upon the hands of (support) evil doers.[2]

Bildad did not contribute anything to the solution of Job's difficulties, but he furnished him with a text for a continuation of the complaint of chap. 7. "God will not reject a perfect man," said the sage. "True," retorts Job, "but how can one be just (defend his integrity) before God?" Then he proceeds to show that it is impossible, at least for him, for one reason because God will not meet him face to face. He says:

> Lo, he passeth by me, and I see him not,
> He moveth onward, and I perceive him not;[3]

and again,

> If I called, he would not answer me;
> I should not believe that he gave ear to my voice.[4]

He doubts whether it would avail him anything to meet the Almighty, because, secondly, God is so "mighty in strength," that he (Job) would be forced to take the tone, not of a plaintiff, but of a suppliant;[5] or, if he undertook to maintain his innocence, his own mouth would betray him;[6] so great would be the awe and terror inspired by the divine presence. Even under the most favorable circumstances there would be no chance of vindication, because, thirdly, God is so "wise of heart" that, "if he should be pleased to contend" with Job, the poor man could not meet "one in

[1] Job 8:3 ff.
[2] Job 8:20.
[3] Job 9:11.
[4] Job 9:16 (Gr.).
[5] Job 9:15.
[6] Job 9:20.

a thousand" of his requirements.[1] In 9:30 he puts it more picturesquely:

> If I should wash myself in snow-water,
> And cleanse my hands in lye,
> Then thou wouldst dip me in offal,
> So that my friends would abhor me.

Therefore he says,

> It is all one; . . . .
> He destroyeth the perfect with the wicked;[2]

and,

> If I be wicked, woe to me;
> And if I be righteous, I shall not lift up my head.[3]

In the face of these equally cruel alternatives he cries to the God whom he seems unable either to please or to escape:

> Wherefore, then, hast thou brought me forth from the womb?[4]
> Let me alone, that I may brighten a little,
> Before I go whence I shall not return.[5]

The most salient feature of chaps. 9 f. is the stubbornness with which Job insists on his integrity. In 9:21 he declares in so many words that he is "perfect," that is, innocent of any conscious departure from rectitude, and in 10:7 that God knows that he is "not wicked." Nothing could more profoundly shock such men as his friends. When, therefore, Zophar, the Naamathite, speaks, he begins by rebuking Job as a blasphemous boaster for saying,

> My walk is clean,
> And I am pure in his eyes,[6]

[1] Job 9:2. [3] Job 10:15. [5] Job 10:20 f.
[2] Job 9:22. [4] Job 10:18. [6] 11:4 (Gr.).

and by telling him plainly that he is suffering, not more, but less, severely than his presumption deserves. Then, in the same superior tone, he assures the sufferer that if he will appeal to God and put away his iniquity, he may yet lift up his face "without spot" and make his life "clearer than noonday";[1] but he reminds him that the only refuge of the wicked is death.

Hitherto, although Job has refused to accept the diagnosis by which his friends have attempted to explain his unhappy condition, and frankly confessed his disappointment in them, he has treated them with ordinary courtesy. Now, however, irritated beyond endurance by the "continual dropping" of their shallow and monotonous reflections, he begins with the ironical remark,

> No doubt ye are the people,
> And wisdom will die with you![2]

and follows it with the impatient assertion,

> I have understanding as well as ye:
> Yea, who knoweth not such things as these?[3]

which is strengthened by the addition of the rhetorical questions,

> Doth not the ear try words,
> As the palate tasteth the food?
> Is there wisdom in years,
> And in length of days understanding?[4]

See, also, 13:2, where he repeats in substance the assertion of 11:3.

This declaration of independence is not a mere outburst of impatience. By it Job serves notice on his

[1] Job 11:13 ff.
[2] Job 12:2.
[3] Job 12:3.
[4] Job 12:11 f.

friends of a changed attitude, not only toward them, but toward his Maker, and at once proceeds to show that a new spirit has taken possession of him. In the first place, not content with simply rebuking them, he now takes the aggressive against them. They have accused him of blasphemy because, on the supposition that God rewarded and punished according to conduct, he could not see the justice of the misfortunes that had befallen him. He now accuses them of blindly accepting the principle that whatever is, is right, and thus virtually denying the moral character of the divine government. He says:

> Will ye speak injustice for God,
> And pour forth deception for him?
> Will ye favor the Almighty,
> Or will ye strive for God?[1]

He warns them that, if they do, so far from winning his favor, they will only incur his displeasure:

> He will sternly rebuke you,
> If ye secretly favor him.[2]

He wonders that they dare persist in their ignorant and gratuitous apologetic:

> Doth not an uprising by him affright you,
> And the dread of him fall upon you?[3]

The verses quoted have a humorous suggestion. It is sometimes very amusing to see the mingled surprise and mortification that shows itself when such men as Job's friends find themselves the accused instead of the accusers. There is, however, a more serious side to the matter. The attack by which Job puts his

[1] Job 13:7 f. [2] Job 13:10. [3] Job 13:11.

tormentors on the defensive puts him into a new attitude, or, better, reveals his real attitude, toward God; namely, that of a defender, instead of a denier of the moral character of the divine government. It is the thoroughness of his conviction on this point that makes him assert his integrity. It is his only remaining asset, and at the same time, he believes, the only possession by which he can ever hope to obtain acceptance with God. He says,

> Yet I will maintain my way before him;
> It is also my salvation
> That a godless man cometh not before him.[1]

He is determined to stand by his own conscience, even if he dies without being vindicated.[2] He cannot deny the possibility of such an outcome, since he knows that one cannot "bring a clean thing out of an unclean,"[3] that is, that he is human, and that therefore he cannot satisfy the divine standard; but he is not without hope, if God will grant him an untrammeled hearing. He pleads for one:

> Only do not two things to me;
> Then will I not hide myself from thee:
> Withdraw thy hand far from me,
> And let no dread of thee affright me;
> Then call thou, and I will answer,
> Or I will speak, and do thou reply to me.[4]

In this way he hopes to learn the extent of his iniquity, if he has unconsciously sinned, and to make atonement for his transgressions.[5]

This appeal remains unanswered. God gives no sign, and Job falls into gloomy reflections on the brevity

[1] Job 13:15 f. [3] Job 14:4. [5] Job 13:23.
[2] Job 13:1, 15a. [4] Job 13:20–22.

and uncertainty of human existence. In the midst of them a comparison in which he indulges suggests the thought that, if man lived a second time, as the tree that is felled sprouts and grows again, he could afford to suffer to the end of the first stage. This is his way of putting it:

> All the days of my service would I wait,
> Till my release came.
> Thou wouldst call, and I should answer;
> Thou wouldst long for the work of thy hands.[1]

Here, however, when he seems on the point of finding a solace for his sufferings, he drops the new thought and relapses into pessimism. He concludes by saying of man,

> But his flesh giveth him only pain,
> And his soul bringeth him only sorrow.[2]

The three friends have now, one after another, spoken, and Job still remains unconvinced. Eliphaz makes a second attempt,[3] but there is nothing new in his speech, except the tartness with which he repays Job's disrespect for him and his colleagues, and the significant omission of any reference to the rewards of the righteous, while the misfortunes in store for the wicked are depicted with a haunting vividness.

Job is quick to catch the speaker's meaning. He sees in it a verdict against him. Naturally, he is disappointed. He puts his disappointment into the familiar paradox, "Troublesome comforters are ye

[1] Job 14:14 f.

[2] Job 14:23. This verse is usually interpreted as a description of the condition of man in Sheol, but vs. 12 hardly permits such an interpretation.

[3] Chap. 15.

all."[1] Then, as he looks about him for a real friend and sees nothing but hostility, he breaks into a new complaint in the course of which he again protests his innocence:

> My eyes are red with weeping,
> And on my eyelids is darkness;
> Although there is no violence in my hands,
> And my prayer is pure.[2]

The contrast thus presented prompts him to an outburst in which the growing conviction that he will one day be vindicated again seeks expression:

> O earth, cover not my blood,
> And let there be no rest for my cry!
> Lo, even now is my witness in heaven,
> And my voucher on high.[3]

Realizing how completely his earthly friends have deserted him, he appeals once more to the heavenly both to act as his judge and be surety for him at his own tribunal;[4] but he fears that, unless he is speedily relieved, he will not live to hear the verdict.[5]

Bildad, in his second speech,[6] takes his cue from Eliphaz, and, after rebuking Job for his impatience, treats him to another description of the fate of the wicked.

In reply Job insists that it is not he, but God, who has done injustice,[7] and, in support of his contention, recites the wrongs that he has suffered. Having thus given vent to his misery, he appeals to his friends for sympathy, but, as if suddenly reminded that his only

[1] Job 16:2.
[2] Job 16:16 f.
[3] Job 16:18 f.
[4] Job 17:3.
[5] Job 17:11.
[6] Chap. 18.
[7] Job 19:6.

hope is in God, he cheers himself with the triumphant confession:

> But I myself know that my redeemer liveth,
> And one will later arise over the dust;
> . . . . . .
> And without my flesh I shall see God:
> Whom I shall see for myself,
> And my eyes shall behold, and not a stranger.

He is so wrought upon by the vision that he exclaims,

> My reins are consumed within me![1]

He concludes with a warning to his critics not to persist in their attempts to correct him, lest his avenger, on his appearance, bring them to judgment.[2]

Zophar, so far from heeding this warning, also takes for granted Job's guilt, and ventures to suggest some of the ways in which he has offended:[3] namely, by neglecting, or even robbing and oppressing, his poor neighbors.

Job, having, in his last speech, reached a tolerable position with reference to his personal experience, ignores the insinuations of the last speaker and attacks the general proposition on which his friends have been ringing the changes, that the wicked suffer for their offenses, either in their own lives or in those of their children. He objects, in the first place, that

> They finish their days in prosperity,
> And go down in peace to Sheol;[4]

and, secondly, on the supposition that the fathers are punished in their children:

[1] Job 19:25–27.
[2] Job 19:28 f.
[3] Chap. 20.
[4] Job 21:13.

God layeth up his iniquity for his children!
Let him repay him that he may feel it.
Let his own eyes see his destruction;
And let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
For what careth he for his house after him,
When the number of his months is ended?[1]

His experience is that

One dieth in his full strength,
Being wholly at ease and quiet;
. . . . . .
And another dieth in bitterness of soul,
And never tasteth good.
They lie down alike in the dust,
And the worm covereth them.[2]

In his third speech[3] Eliphaz, ignoring the invitation to a more general discussion, confines himself almost entirely to the case of Job, and accuses him more openly than he or either of his colleagues has hitherto done of "great wickedness," specifying various forms of cruelty to the unfortunate. He does not stop with these accusations, but adds an exhortation to come to terms of peace with God, assuring him that

He delivereth the innocent,
Yea, he is delivered through the cleanness of his hands.[4]

In reply Job gives expression to an earnest desire to meet his Judge, to "come even to his seat,"[5] and at the same time to a firm conviction that, if he could have such an opportunity, God would "give heed" to him,[6] and he (Job) would "come forth as gold."[7] He cannot,

[1] Job 21:19–21.
[2] Job 21:23, 25 f.
[3] Chap. 22.
[4] Job 22:30.
[5] Job 23:3.
[6] Vs. 6.
[7] Vs. 10.

however, persuade himself that his desire will be fulfilled, God having apparently, by an arbitrary exercise of his sovereignty, decreed his destruction:

> He hath willed, and who will reverse it?
> And what his soul desired he hath done.[1]

Bildad, in his third speech, a part of which, chap. 26, is attributed to Job,[2] dwells on the greatness of God, in view of which he asks,

> How, then, can man be just before God?
> Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?[3]

adding,

> Lo, even the moon hath no brightness,
> And the stars are not pure in his sight;
> How much less man that is a worm,
> And the son of man that is a grub![4]

The thought of man's weakness and imperfection as compared with God was very clearly presented by Job himself earlier in the discussion, but he did not then admit that inability to reach the divine standard was an unpardonable fault in his character. He still maintains that, although he is not in favor with the Almighty, he has not consciously offended. He says,

> My righteousness will I hold fast, and not let it go,
> My heart reproacheth me not for my days.[5]

The rest of chap. 27, from vs. 8 onward, which is also attributed to Job, should probably, as Duhm

[1] Job 23:13. Chap. 24 is included in the received text of Job's speech, but it is entirely out of character, and therefore must be from another hand than that of the original poet, except perhaps vs. 25.

[2] According to Duhm, 26:1 should be canceled, and vss. 2–4 inserted between 25:1 and 2.

[3] Job 25:4. [4] Job 25:5 f. [5] Job 27:6.

suggests, be put into the mouth of Zophar. He is thus permitted to make a third speech, like the other friends, and repeat in substance what he said in chap. 20 about the fate of the wicked.

The answer to this speech is found in chaps. 29, 30, except vss. 1–8, and 31. In chap. 29 Job describes the happiness of his earlier condition, when the Almighty was yet with him,[1] and he enjoyed, not only abundant prosperity, but the gratitude and reverence of his fellows, and expected to multiply his days "as the sand," because he punished injustice and delivered all that suffered from their misfortunes. In chap. 30 he pictures the change in his fortunes, exposed, as he now is, to indignities from the lowest of his kind,[2] and tortured by incessant physical suffering,[3] "a brother to jackals and a companion of ostriches."[4]

This vivid and realistic picture furnishes a new occasion for the question why Job is so severely afflicted. The poet, if he had allowed Job's friends to speak a fourth time, could only have put into their mouths the shallow reflections on his character with which they have already wearied him. To avoid such "vain repetitions," he allows Job in chap. 31 to anticipate their explanation and refute it by the most detailed and effective defense that he has attempted. It is in the form of a recital wherein he defines his attitude toward his fellows and describes his past conduct in his various domestic and social relations. It is a remarkable showing. The object of the author was, no doubt, to clothe his hero with the finest moral

[1] Vs. 5.
[2] Vs. 9–15.
[3] Vss. 16–23.
[4] Vs. 29.

qualities and make him a pattern and example to those for whom he was writing; and he succeeded to such a degree that Duhm declares that this chapter "marks the climax of Old Testament ethics, surpassing in this respect, not only anything that the original story had to offer, but the Decalogue and even the prophets." The following are the virtues that Job is here represented as exemplifying:[1]

1. Honesty in word and deed; vss. 5 f.
2. Respect for others' rights and possessions; vss. 7 f.
3. Loyalty in the marital relation; vss. 9–12.
4. Consideration for servants; vss. 13–15.
5. Charity toward the unfortunate; vss. 16–20.
6. Scorn of injustice; vss. 21–23.[2]
7. Freedom from avarice; vss. 24 f.
8. Devotion to God on high; vss. 26–28.
9. Superiority to resentment; vss. 29 f.
10. Generosity toward dependents and strangers; vss. 31 f.
11. Courage backed by a good conscience; vss. 33 f.

This is a noble array, and one of which anyone in any age might be proud. Job finds so great comfort in it that he well-nigh forgets the losses and sufferings that he has endured. It gives him boldness, too. He feels that, having searched himself, his motives and his conduct, and found nothing, he need not fear the eye of the Almighty. Indeed, he is eager for such an examination. He exclaims:

[1] The first four verses are neglected because they anticipate vss. 9–12 and do not fit into the general scheme of the chapter; vss. 38–40, also, because they are apparently an afterthought.

[2] In vs. 21 for "the fatherless" read "the innocent."

O that I had one to hear me,

. . . . . .

And the bill my opponent hath written!
Surely I would carry it on my shoulder,
I would bind it upon me like a crown;
The number of my steps would I declare,
As a prince would I receive him.[1]

In the Book of Job as originally written this challenge was immediately followed, not by the long and tedious speech of Elihu, in chaps. 32–37, but by Yahweh's answer "out of the whirlwind," which now begins with chap. 38. In it there is no attempt to meet Job's complaint by explaining his sufferings or the apparent confusion in the distribution of happiness and unhappiness in the world. It is almost entirely devoted to a panorama of the wonders of the material universe in illustration of the wisdom and the power of the Creator as compared with his human creatures. Toward the end, however, there is a couplet that has profound ethical significance, namely, the double question,

Wilt thou destroy my rectitude?
Wilt thou condemn me for the sake of being justified?[2]

The peculiar phraseology of the second line implies that, as Job himself has more than once made very apparent, the consciousness of his rectitude was dear to him above everything else; while the whole couplet is the strongest possible expression of God's jealousy for his own righteousness.

The words with which God closes must be read in the light of this outburst. God now, in his turn, challenges Job, saying:

[1] Job 31:35–37. [2] Job 40:8.

Deck now thyself with pride and grandeur,
Yea, clothe thyself with splendor and glory.
Pour out the fury of thy anger;
Every one that is proud abase.
Every one that is haughty humble;
And tread down the wicked where they stand.
Tread them in the dust together;
Their faces shroud in darkness.
Then will I also praise thee,
When thy right hand giveth thee victory.[1]

Job is deeply impressed. The necessity of defending himself against his officious friends had given him an exaggerated importance in his own eyes. He now sees that he is really but a small part of the scheme of things to which he belongs, and he feels a new reverence for, and confidence in, the Power that presides over it. He replies, therefore:

I know that thou canst do all things,
And that nothing is too difficult for thee.
Therefore have I declared what I understood not,
Things too wonderful for me to comprehend.
I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,
But now my eye hath seen thee;
Therefore am I utterly subdued,
And I repent in dust and ashes.[2]

It remains to consider the passages in the Book of Job that are later than the original poem, so far as they have ethical significance.

The first of these passages is 12:4–10, which, however, is noticeable, not so much for any substantial divergence from the rest of the speech of which it is a part, as for

[1] Job 40:10–14. [2] Job 42:2 f., 5 f.

an exaggeration of the condition described, for example, in the contrasted statements,

> A laughing-stock is the just, the perfect man;[1]

and

> Peaceful are the tents of robbers,
> And safety have they that provoke God.[2]

The same quality appears in chap. 24, where the background is evidently a state of lawlessness of which the Book of Job elsewhere gives no intimation. It is a time when

> The wicked remove landmarks;
> They seize flocks and feed them;
> They drive off the ass of orphans;
> They take the widow's ox as a pledge;
> They turn the needy from the way;
> The poor of the land all hide themselves.[3]

Murder and adultery, also, according to vss. 14–17, are common. Nor is this the only indication of ungenuineness. In vss. 18–24 Job is represented as abandoning his contention that the wicked do not receive their just deserts, for that of his opponents and declaring that

> Their portion is cursed in the land.

It is clear that, if this chapter belongs to the original poem, it should be put into the mouth, not of Job, but of one of his ineffectual comforters.

There are two passages in chap. 31 whose origin is doubtful, namely, vss. 2–4 and vss. 38–40, because, as already noted, the first has a peculiar form and anticipates vss. 9–12, and the second, unless it has been misplaced, is evidently an afterthought.

[1] Job 12:4. [2] Job 12:6. [3] Job 24:2–4.

The speeches of Elihu, chaps. 32–37, which, according to many of the best scholars, are of secondary origin, teach the same doctrines as those of the three original friends, but in a rather more developed form. Elihu follows most closely Eliphaz, who, it will be remembered, in his first speech,[1] tried to comfort Job by dwelling on the disciplinary value of suffering. When one is suffering, he says,

> He prayeth to God, and he is gracious to him,
> And he seeth his face with rejoicing.[2]

He takes occasion, however, to warn Job that God is just:

> For the work of a man will he render to him,
> And cause every man to meet what his ways deserve;[3]

and that, although

> He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous,[4]

and pardons and restores to favor those who submit and promise amendment,[5]

> If they hearken not, they pass into Sheol,
> And die without knowledge.[6]

It is not necessary to dwell at greater length on these passages, since it is clear from what has already been said with reference to them that their author or authors sympathized with Job's critics; in other words, he or they entirely missed the lesson that the original author wished to teach.

[1] Job 5:17 ff. [3] Job 34:11. [5] Job 34:32.
[2] Job 33:26. [4] Job 36:7. [6] Job 36:12.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE BOOKS OF JOEL AND JONAH

I. JOEL

The Book of Joel registers the limit of development in the direction of national particularism. There is not the slighest tendency on the part of the author to find fault with the moral condition of his people, even in the face of the plague of locusts and the devastation wrought by them, as described in the first two chapters. The nearest approach to criticism is found in 1:5, where, according to the English Version, he calls on the "drunkards" to weep over the calamity that has befallen the land. In this case, however, the word rendered "drunkards," as appears from the parallel expression "drinkers of wine," means those who are fond of wine and therefore especially interested in the prospect of a vintage, just as the priests, who appear in vss. 9 f., are interested, not only in this, but in the other crops. They mourn because "the grain is destroyed, the must is dried up (ashamed), the oil languisheth."[1]

The writer, having no fault to find with his people, does not seek the cause of the visitation, as an older prophet would have done, in their disloyalty to Yahweh, or their unfaithfulness to one another; but, accepting it as inexplicable, calls for a fast and a solemn festival[2] and a unanimous appeal to Yahweh for assistance, in the hope that, since "he is gracious and merciful, slow

[1] Isa. 24:7.

[2] Joel 1:14.

to anger, and abundant in kindness, and repenteth of evil, perhaps (who knoweth) he will turn and repent and leave a blessing behind him, even a meal offering and a drink offering," for his own service.[1] His faith grows as he proceeds, until he is prepared to predict, not only that Yahweh will put an end to the present distress and never again put his people to shame,[2] but will pour his spirit upon them in such measure that even their slaves, male and female, because they belong to Jews, will share the blessing.[3]

The day that witnesses this great miracle, however, will be a calamitous one for all but the Jews and their dependents; for at that time Yahweh "will gather all nations . . . . into the valley of Jehoshaphat" and "inflict judgment upon them." Thus will he avenge the injuries done to his people by the other nations.[4] Thereafter "Jerusalem will be holy; no stranger (except as a slave) will pass through it any more."[5] This is Judaism at its narrowest—and barrenest.

2. JONAH

The Book of Jonah is the antidote for that of Joel. The central figure is a typical Jew of the fifth century B.C., narrow and exclusive, proud of his own race, but devoid of sympathy for any other. So cruel is he in his exclusiveness that he refuses to carry a warning to the inhabitants of Nineveh and thus make it possible for them to escape threatened destruction. The excuse he finally gives is a classic example of religious conceit,[6] for no one not convinced of his own impeccability

[1] Joel 2:13 f. [3] Joel 2:28 ff. [5] Joel 3:17.
[2] Joel 2:23 ff. [4] Joel 3:4 (Gr.), 19, 21. [6] Jonah 4:2.

would insist upon unmitigated justice for all offenders. The doctrine of the author, on the other hand, is by no means sentimentalism. God does not withdraw his decree until the people of Nineveh, from the least to the greatest, have not only assumed the garb and posture of penitents but, in response to a royal proclamation, turned "every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in his hands."[1] But, when he "saw their works," he "repented of the evil that he said he would do to them, and did it not."[2] Finally he rebukes the blind cruelty of his messenger, because, although he cannot endure the slightest personal inconvenience, he is perfectly willing to witness the destruction of a "great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hands and their left hands, and also many cattle."[3]

The book is evidently a protest against the formality and exclusiveness that took possession of the mass of the Jews after the adoption of the Priestly legislation; and it must have had its effect, for it teaches clearly, not only that morality is an essential element in religion, but that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him."[4] These lessons have always been largely overlooked, because the readers of the book have too often been of the same narrow type as the principal character.

[1] Jonah 3:8.

[2] Jonah 3:10.

[3] Jonah 4:11.

[4] Acts 10:34 f.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

The Book of Proverbs, as already explained, is of composite origin, the component parts being the Prologue, chaps. 1–9, the main collections, 10:1—22:16 and 25:1—29:27, and the supplementary sections, 22:17—24:22; 24:23–34; 30:1–33; 31:1–9; and 31:10–31. The various divisions of the book, however, have so much in common that it is not necessary to discuss them separately in this connection.

The key to the book and its several parts, as 4:7 leads one to expect, is "wisdom." It is throughout emphatically "the principal thing." Indeed, one may say that it is the one thing "needful," since it implies or involves everything the contributors to the book thought admirable, and secures to its possessor everything that they deemed most worthy of pursuit or attainment.

In the first place, the wisdom of the Proverbs has a religious connotation. This is clear from the start, the title being immediately followed by the statement, as a motto, that

> The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge,[1]

the first thing to be learned by one who wishes to be, and to be esteemed, wise. The fear of Yahweh, however, here means, not mere dread of the Almighty, but a humble recognition of his authority and a cheerful

[1] Prov. 1:7.

readiness to do his will so far as it can be ascertained by human endeavor. Lest the reader forget the importance of this principle, it is repeated in 9:10, where it takes the expanded form of

> The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom,
> And knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Both passages are based on 15:33,

> The fear of Yahweh is the instruction of wisdom,
> And before honor is humility.

The author of the last passage was familiar with the religious observances of his people, and, like him of the Prologue,[1] doubtless appreciated their significance; but he was also acquainted with the prophets and thoroughly in sympathy with those who insisted that Yahweh was a moral being and that, therefore, religion without morality was an intolerable contradiction. He expresses himself to this effect in 21:3, which reads,

> To do righteousness and justice
> Is more acceptable to Yahweh than sacrifice;

and more strongly in vs. 27 of the same chapter, where he declares,

> The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination,
> How much more when he bringeth it with a wicked heart.[2]

It is not strange, therefore, that in 1:2 ff., where the purpose of the compiler is stated in detail, he says it is to enable the reader

> To gain wisdom and training,
> To understand instructive words,
> To get training in wise conduct,
> Righteousness, and justice, and equity;

[1] Prov. 3:9.

[2] See also Prov. 15:8.

and that in 8:13 wisdom personified is made to say,

> Pride, and arrogance, and an evil way,
> And a perverse mouth I hate;

or that the book is largely composed of moral precepts, waymarks for a virtuous and successful life. They are mostly thrown together without regard to any relation to one another, but there are some instances in the later portions of the book in which some of the more odious evils of the period are grouped for condemnation, the most notable example being 6:16–19, where there are enumerated seven things especially abominable to Yahweh, namely, (1) haughty eyes; (2) a lying tongue; (3) hands that shed innocent blood; (4) a heart that deviseth wicked schemes; (5) feet that make haste to do harm; (6) a false witness that uttereth lies; and (7) one that soweth discord among brethren.

This *index prohibitorius* can hardly be called complete, but the banishment of the offenses here enumerated would doubtless greatly improve the moral condition of any community.

In the introductory passage already cited the purpose of the collector was, not only to impart instruction in "righteousness, and justice, and equity," but also

> To give prudence to the simple,
> To the young man knowledge and discretion.[1]

In other words, the wisdom of the book includes training in the art of so adapting one's self and one's ideas, powers, and resources to one's environment, as most surely and readily to attain the end or ends that one holds most desirable. Many of its precepts, therefore, are simply the dicta of common prudence with reference

[1] Prov. 1:4.

to everyday affairs. Among the acquirements recommended are prudence in the narrower sense,[1] discretion,[2] deliberation,[3] caution,[4] efficiency, especially in women,[5] diligence,[6] contentment,[7] reticence,[8] cheerfulness,[9] and affability.[10] All these, in so far as one possesses them, help one to success in life, if—and this is the test of their relative values and importance—at the same time one fears God and works righteousness. Otherwise they can only delay to some extent the failure and ruin that result from the neglect of the moral and religious elements of character.[11] Those who thus make shipwreck of their lives, in contrast with the wise, are called "the simple," also "scoffers," but most frequently "fools."[12]

This brief sketch will, perhaps, suffice to indicate the general character of the Book of Proverbs and the relation of the ethical element to its remaining content. It is now necessary to consider more at length its purely ethical teaching and the ethical status that its teaching presupposes.

In the first place, although in this book moral perfection is not so directly ascribed to Yahweh as in some others, the reader is never allowed to forget that the world was brought into being and is governed by "a power that makes for righteousness." Thus in 15:3 it is asserted that

> The eyes of Yahweh are everywhere,
> Keeping watch upon the evil and the good;

[1] Prov. 13:16; 24:27; etc.
[2] Prov. 11:22; 15:23; etc.
[3] Prov. 15:22; 19:2; etc.
[4] Prov. 14:6; 28:14; etc.
[5] Prov. 14:1; 31:10 ff.; etc.
[6] Prov. 6:6–11; 12:24; etc.
[7] Prov. 14:30; 23:4 f.; etc.
[8] Prov. 12:23; 17:27 f.; etc.
[9] Prov. 15:13; 17:22; etc.
[10] Prov. 15:1; 16:24; etc.
[11] Prov. 5:3; 11:18; 17:28; etc.
[12] Prov. 1:22.

and elsewhere he is described as not only concerned about the ethical condition of his creatures, but able to discern whether they are good or evil:

> All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes,
> But Yahweh weigheth the spirits.[1]

He does his work thoroughly:

> The fining-pot is for silver and the furnace for gold;
> But Yahweh is a tester of hearts.[2]

He has so made man that the offender himself becomes his own accuser, for

> The spirit of man is the lamp of God,
> Searching all the chambers of the soul.[3]

If he is disposed to defend himself, he is met with the reminder,

> Doth not he that weigheth hearts perceive?
> And doth not he that watcheth thy soul know?

and the warning,

> Yea, he will requite men according as they act.[4]

There are two general classes, the righteous and the wicked, and his attitude toward them respectively reflects his own moral character. The following are some of the ways in which it is described:

> The curse of Yahweh is on the house of the wicked,
> But he blesseth the abode of the righteous.[5]

> Yahweh will not suffer the soul of the righteous to perish,
> But the desire of the wicked he rejecteth.[6]

[1] Prov. 16:2; 21:2.
[2] Prov. 17:3.
[3] Prov. 20:27.
[4] Prov. 24:12.
[5] Prov. 3:33.
[6] Prov. 10:3.

The fear of Yahweh prolongeth days,
But the years of the wicked shall be shortened.[1]

The perverse in heart are an abomination to Yahweh,
But the perfect in *their* way are his delight.[2]

A stronghold is Yahweh to a man of integrity,
But destruction to workers of iniquity.[3]

The way of the wicked is an abomination to Yahweh,
But he loveth him that pursueth righteousness.[4]

A good man will obtain favor of Yahweh,
But a man of wicked devices will he condemn.[5]

Yahweh is far from the wicked,
But he heareth the prayer of the righteous.[6]

He cannot tolerate any other attitude among men. Says 17:15,

He that acquitteth the wicked and he that condemneth the righteous
Are both an abomination to Yahweh.

These are the passages in which Yahweh is brought into express relations with the classes named. There are others in which the harmony of the righteous, and the dissonance of the wicked, with the world is quite as clearly taught, but without tracing the result in either case directly to the Creator. Such are 2:21 f.; 4:18 f.; 10:2, 6, 7, 9, 16, 24, 25, 28, 30; 11:3, 4,[7] 6, 8, 10, 18, 19, 21, 27, 31; 12:3, 7, 13, 21; 13:2, 6, 9, 21, 22, 25; 14:11, 14, 19, 32,[8] 34; 15:6; 21:12, 18;

[1] Prov. 10:27.
[2] Prov. 11:20.
[3] Prov. 10:29.
[4] Prov. 15:9.
[5] Prov. 12:2.
[6] Prov. 15:29.
[7] Read "In a man's integrity is his hope," etc.
[8] In the Greek like 11:7, emended.

24:16; 28:18; 29:6, 16. To these must be added the passages in which the righteous or the wicked alone are mentioned. In some of them[1] Yahweh personally rewards or punishes, while in others the impersonal form is employed.[2]

The passages cited being all of a general character, the rewards promised and the penalties threatened are naturally correspondingly indefinite.[3] There are, however, instances in which certain forms of good are specified: the favor of Yahweh,[4] wealth,[5] long life,[6] relief from trouble and danger,[7] comfort and happiness,[8] and praise and honor.[9]

It will have been noted that all the rewards mentioned are individual and, so far as they are definite, temporal.[10] One of the passages cited teaches in so many words that

> The righteous shall be recompensed in the earth,
> How much more the wicked and the sinner;[11]

and the disciple is warned not to give place to doubt on the subject:

> Let not thy heart envy sinners,
> But fear thou Yahweh always;
> For there is a reward for thee,
> And thy hope shall not fail;[12]

[1] Prov. 2:7 f.; 3:8; 16:4; 19:23; 23:17 f.

[2] Prov. 11:7; 12:28; 20:7; 21:21; 22:8; 24:19 f.

[3] Prov. 3:33; 10:6; etc.

[4] Prov. 12:2; 15:9; etc.

[5] Prov. 13:22; 15:6; etc.

[6] Prov. 2:21; 10:27; 11:19; etc.

[7] Prov. 11:5, 8; 12:21; etc.

[8] Prov. 3:8; 13:9; etc.

[9] Prov. 14:19; 21:21; etc.

[10] On Prov. 11:7 and 14:32, see p. 321.

[11] Prov. 11:31.

[12] Prov. 23:17 f.

and

> Fret not thyself because of evil-doers,
> Neither envy thou the wicked;
> For there is no reward for the bad man,
> The light of the wicked shall go out.[1]

At first sight the absence of criticism or apology on this important subject seems to indicate that the book, if it was not written by Solomon, belongs to a comparatively early period in the history of the Hebrews. There is, however, another and, in view of all the facts, a more plausible explanation. The book is not a collection of popular saws, but a studied literary product in aphoristic form intended for popular instruction. Now, the form chosen, in its very nature, permits only rather superficial generalizations, and it is often better, as the authors of these proverbs surely were wise enough to know, in dealing with simple people to give the rule, in the first instance, without the exceptions. From this point of view the doctrine in question loses its significance as an indication of the age of the book or any part of it.

There is another point with reference to the rewards offered in the Proverbs that deserves attention. In the passages cited, as has been shown, they are of several kinds. Thus far nothing has been adduced to show that the Jewish sages did not rate them all of equal value. This, however, is not the case. They made distinctions. Thus, although they two or three times present material wealth as a blessing, elsewhere in the book they directly or indirectly teach that it is by no means of the greatest importance. A hint to this

[1] Prov. 24:19 f. See also 3:31; 24:1.

effect is found in the encomium on wisdom, which, as has been explained, includes righteousness:

> Happy the man that findeth wisdom,
> And the man that getteth understanding:
> For the gain thereof is richer than silver,
> And the income therefrom than gold.
> It is more precious than coral,
> And no treasures compare with it.
> Length of days is in its right hand,
> In its left hand are riches and honor.
> Its ways are pleasant ways,
> And all its paths peaceful.
> It is a tree of life to them that lay hold thereof,
> Yea, happy are they that hold it fast.[1]

Here belong also certain passages in which wealth is compared with other recognized goods; for example,

> Better is a little, with the fear of Yahweh,
> Than great treasure and trouble therewith;[2]
>
> A good name is rather to be chosen than great wealth,
> Approval than silver and gold;[3]
>
> Better is a little, with righteousness,
> Than an abundant revenue without justice.[4]

Be it observed that, in all these passages, the sages, unlike Job's friends, admit the possibility of exceptions to the traditional doctrine of retribution; or, perhaps, treat the poverty of the wise and righteous as only a temporary or probational condition. See 3:11 f., where the disciplinary view of the suffering of the righteous is distinctly stated. Cf. Toy.

[1] Prov. 3:13 ff. See also 8:10 f., 18 f.; 16:16.

[2] Prov. 15:16. [3] Prov. 22:1.

[4] Prov. 16:8. See also 15:17; 16:19; 19:1 (28:6), 22; 28:11.

The starting-point for a detailed examination of the ethical field covered by the Book of Proverbs is determined by the prominence given to wisdom. Wisdom in man is an acquirement. It sometimes costs long and painful effort. Its foundation is laid in the fear of Yahweh. But the fear of Yahweh is a form of humility. It is not strange, therefore, that humility in its various manifestations is strongly commended and its opposites as vigorously condemned. The good man is one who not only fears Yahweh, but takes the docile attitude toward all who can help him to lead a successful life. The unseen monitor who calls herself Wisdom has his constant attention. She says to him:

> Hear instruction, and become wise,
> And reject it not.
> Happy the man that listeneth to me,
> Watching always at my gate,
> Waiting at the posts of my doors.
> For whoso findeth me findeth life,
> And obtaineth favor from Yahweh;
> But he that misseth me wrongeth himself;
> All that hate me love death.[1]

He listens also to the sages, those who have given special thought to the problems of life, and whose vocation it is to teach their fellows how to get the most out of existence.[2] He is submissive to the constituted authorities,[3] and particularly respectful toward his natural instructors, his father and mother.[4] Indeed, he gladly takes counsel with any who are willing to

[1] Prov. 8:33 ff.

[2] Prov. 2:1 ff.; 18:15; 19:20, etc.

[3] Prov. 10:8.

[4] Prov. 1:8; 13:1, etc.

advise him,[1] and being never too old to learn,[2] welcomes even reproof from those who are competent to administer it.[3] He carries the same spirit into all his relations with men, being more anxious to deserve honor than to obtain it.[4] On the folly of conceit, see 12:15; 26:12, etc.; on indocility, 12:1; 13:18, etc. Pride, which, it will be remembered, is one of the seven things that "Yahweh hateth,"[5] is repeatedly denounced as not only intolerable but exceedingly dangerous.[6] The humility of the Proverbs is a noble and admirable quality, as Jesus testified when he borrowed from 25:6 f. the substance of the rebuke he administered to the scribes and pharisees for crowding into the best seats at a feast to which he was invited.

The sages of this book also emphasized the importance of self-control. A choleric man, they urge, is in constant danger, not only of saying or doing things prejudicial to his own interests, but of provoking others to wicked speech or action. As 29:22 puts it,

> An irascible man stirreth up strife,
> And a passionate man is a great transgressor.[7]

He that is slow to anger, on the other hand, not only holds himself in check,[8] but prevents the strife that he might easily have excited.[9] The practice of such self-control is sometimes very difficult, but even then

[1] Prov. 12:15; 15:22, etc.
[2] Prov. 1:5.
[3] Prov. 12:1; 17:10, etc.
[4] Prov. 15:33; 25:6 f., etc.
[5] Prov. 6:16 ff.
[6] Prov. 8:13; 11:2; 15:25; 16:5, 18, 19; 21:4, 24; 29:23; 30:13.
[7] See also Prov. 19:19; 22:24 f.; 27:4.
[8] Prov. 29:15.
[9] Prov. 15:18.

It is wisdom in a man to be slow to anger,
And his glory to overlook transgression.[1]

Indeed, according to 16:32, such cases offer the best of opportunities for the display of moral character, since

He that is slow to anger is better than a warrior,
And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

It is easy to see that any person or class of persons who so highly extolled self-control would naturally give temperance in all things an important place in personal ethics. The truth is that in the book of Proverbs is found the most deliberate and effective protest against the dominance of appetite there is in the Old Testament. The first passage to be quoted should be 25:16. It reads,

Hast thou found honey? eat but enough for thee;
Lest thou be sated therewith and vomit it up;

which, of course, means that anything, however good, if abused, becomes distasteful or even injurious.

This principle is applied to both eating and drinking in 21:17, where the disciple is warned that

He that loveth pleasure will come to want,
And he that loveth wine and oil will not be rich;

and in 23:20 f., where it is expanded into

Be not among winebibbers,
Among gluttonous eaters of flesh;
For the drunkard and the glutton come to poverty
And sleepiness clotheth with rags.

Finally, in 23:29 ff. the drunkard is depicted with such vivid realism as powerfully to reinforce the accompanying declaration concerning wine, that

At the last it biteth like a serpent,
And stingeth like an adder;

[1] Prov. 19:11. See also 14:17 (Toy).

and influence the thoughtful to avoid at least the abuse of it. "The abuse of it," be it observed; for, strongly as the Proverbs condemn excess, they do not require anyone who is not a slave to his appetite to abstain entirely from the use of intoxicants. This is clear from 3:10, where an abundant yield of wine is one of the rewards promised those who obey the injunction to honor Yahweh with "their substance" and "the first fruits of all their increase"; and additionally so from 31:4 ff., where, although kings and princes are warned against them,

> Lest they drink and forget the Law,
> And pervert the justice due all the afflicted,

the author recommends their use in certain cases, saying,

> Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish,
> And wine to him that is in bitter distress;
> Let him drink and forget his poverty,
> And remember his trouble no more.[1]

These citations indicate that in the period to which the Proverbs belong intemperance was a serious evil. There was another, sexual license, which was even more degrading, and which, doubtless owing in part to its prevalence and in part to a reaction against it, receives more attention in the Proverbs than in any other book of the Old Testament. It seems to have taken three forms, two of which may be noticed in this connection. The first is incontinence, if, as seems probable, in 31:3 the women are the wives and concubines of the king addressed. The second is fornication or the patronage of the professional prostitutes whose existence in Palestine can be traced to the earliest times. In this

[1] See also Prov. 9:5.

book they are mentioned but three times,[1] and then only in connection with a class of married women who are represented as much more offensive and dangerous to the community. See especially 6:26. The former, however, in 23:27 are compared to "a deep pit," that is, a pitfall for unwary feet.

When one inquires concerning the teaching of the Proverbs on the ethics of the family, one finds in them a new appreciation of women. Not that they are represented as all alike admirable. The most common fault found in them seems to have been a disposition to quarrel and complain.[2] There were some, too, and these among the fairest, whose beauty was

> Like a gold ring in a swine's snout,

so lacking were they in sense;[3] but the judgment of the sages is, on the whole, much more favorable to the sex than that of earlier writers. There is a handsome compliment paid them, if the text is correct, in 11:16. It reads,

> A gracious woman obtaineth honor,
> And violent men obtain riches;

which seems to mean that a woman with gentle manners is as sure to win esteem as an unprincipled man by violent methods to secure wealth, the object of his ambition. This, however, was perhaps not intended to be more flattering than 14:1, where there is attributed to woman a capacity for wisdom, or 31:10 ff., where the ideal woman is described in the multiplicity of her domestic activities. She has hands deft in household arts, a mind alert and practical for business, and a

[1] Prov. 6:26; 7:10; 23:27.

[2] Prov. 19:13; 21:9, 19; 27:15.

[3] Prov. 11:22.

heart abounding in good-will toward all who have occasion to test its goodness. Such a woman, says 31:10, has a value "above corals." It is not strange, therefore, that, in 18:22, where an adjective is to be supplied or understood, it should be said that

> He that hath found a [good] wife hath found a blessing,
> And hath obtained favor from Yahweh;

or, as 19:14 puts it,

> Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers,
> But a capable wife is from Yahweh.[1]

One should not, of course, read too much into these proverbs, but they surely indicate that to the sage or sages with whom they originated, marriage was not a wholly commercial transaction. There is other evidence pointing in the same direction. In 2:17 the husband is called the "friend" of the wife's youth, and the wife who has proved false to her husband is charged with having forgotten "a covenant," not merely with him, but "with God." See also 12:4, where the capable wife is described as "a crown to her husband," and 31:23, where she is credited with enhancing his dignity and reputation among his townsmen. Finally, note that in vs. 31 of the same chapter the book closes with a demand that she be given credit for her ability and publicly commended for her individual attainments.

The recognition of the wife as a gift of Yahweh would naturally have important consequences. It would bring a wedded pair closer together, and the more closely they were united the less the husband would be inclined, even under favoring circumstances, to take a rival to his

[1] Cf. Prov. 12:4; 14:1.

first wife into the family. At any rate, in this book, unless, as has been suggested, 31:3 is an exception, marriage seems to mean the union of one man with one woman to the end of their common lives. See 5:18, but especially 31:29, where the fortunate husband of the ideal wife is made to say,

> Many women have done worthily,
> But thou hast outdone them all.

The idea of marriage taught in the above passages was not universally accepted when they were written. Indeed, there is reason to believe that at that time disloyalty to nuptial duties was alarmingly prevalent. The chief offenders were a class of women, already mentioned, who, although they were married, more or less openly practiced harlotry. One meets them for the first time in 2:16 ff., where the collective name applied to them is "the strange woman." It is not clear just how the name is to be explained: whether these women were actually all foreigners, or were so called because the earliest harlots known to the Hebrews were foreigners and in process of time the name was applied to all women, without regard to nationality, who led a wanton life; but the latter is the more probable theory. That they were married is clear from 2:17, 6:29, and 7:19, where the husband in each case is mentioned. It is not necessary to quote the extended passages where the arts by which they decoyed, and the fate to which they allured, their victims are described. It will suffice to cite 6:26, where these harpies are compared with the ordinary harlots:

> The price of a harlot is a loaf of bread,
> But the adulteress hunts the precious life;

and the warning in 7:25 ff.:

> Let not thy heart turn aside to her ways,
> Stray not into her paths;
> For many are the dead that she hath brought low.
> And very numerous her slain.
> Her house is on the roads to Sheol,
> The descents to the chambers of death.[1]

There are various proverbs concerning children and the relation between them and their parents. Here, as elsewhere in the Old Testament, children are required to honor their fathers and mothers, and those who act otherwise are threatened with the direst consequences.[2]

It is taken for granted that the normal child will wish to please his parents, and the possibility of so doing is several times presented as a motive for pursuing or avoiding a given course,[3] while the earnest disciple is repeatedly exhorted not to neglect the instruction which their experience fits them to give him.[4]

It is, of course, implied in the just-cited exhortations that the parents will give all diligence to the instruction of their children in the things that concern their well-being, especially since, according to the familiar proverb of 22:6, if one

> Train up a child in the way he should go,
> Even when he becometh old he will not depart from it.

In addition it is made the duty, apparently of the father, if he finds that

> Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child,

[1] See further Prov. 5:15 ff.; 9:13 ff.; 22:14; 23:27 f.; 30:20.

[2] Prov. 15:5; 19:26; 20:20; 28:24; 30:11, 17.

[3] Prov. 10:1; 15:20; 23:15; 27:11; 28:7; 29:3.

[4] Prov. 1:8; 4:1; 6:20; 13:1; 23:22; 31:26.

to see to it that

> The rod of correction shall drive it from him;[1]

the inducement to this stern course being that

> He that spareth the rod hateth his son,
> But he that loveth him giveth him timely chastisement.[2]

One gets but here and there a glimpse through the Proverbs into the condition of the slaves of the period. They had their place in every family that enjoyed average prosperity, as well as at the courts of kings.[3] Some of them were persons who had been brought to servitude by laziness, extravagance, or dissipation.[4] On the other hand it was possible for a slave, not only to gain his freedom, but to acquire wealth and attain great honor.[5] The author of 30:22 f. evidently felt that, sometimes at least, it would be better for a slave to remain in bondage, while, according to 29:19, the general character of servants made the use of the rod as necessary as in the education of children.

The form of social organization reflected in the Book of Proverbs is the monarchical. The whole duty of the loyal subject is comprehended in the single sentence,

> Fear Yahweh, my son, and the king.[6]

This might be interpreted as requiring obedience to a given sovereign; but it is more probably a general precept implying that the king is a representative of the Deity, and, as such, fulfils the requirements of an ideal

[1] Prov. 22:15.

[2] Prov. 13:24. See also 19:18; 23:13 f.; 29:15, 17.

[3] Prov. 12:9; 14:35; 30:10.

[4] Prov. 11:29; 12:24; 29:21.

[5] Prov. 17:2; 19:10; 30:22 f.

[6] Prov. 24:21.

administration. At any rate, it is the ideal ruler who is meant in 8:15, where Wisdom declares,

> By me kings rule,
> And princes decree justice;

and in 16:10, which reads,

> The lips of the king are an oracle,
> His mouth doth not transgress in judgment.[1]

In all these passages that which distinguishes the ideal king above everything else is his justice. There is another series of proverbs which agree in teaching that no ruler can be called a genuine king, unless he is just. Thus, 20:26 says,

> A wise king winnoweth the wicked,
> And passeth the wheel over them;

and 29:4,

> The king by justice establisheth the land,
> But he that exacteth gifts overthroweth it.[2]

Indeed, the same demand is laid upon all who have any share in the government of their fellows, for, according to 18:5,

> To favor the guilty is not good,
> Also to deny the innocent justice.[3]

Naturally the Proverbs condemn any attempt by bribery to "pervert the course of justice."[4] Here, also, belongs 28:17, if, as seems probable, it forbids one to assist a murderer to escape the penalty of the crime that he has committed.

[1] See also Prov. 16:12 f.; 20:8.

[2] See also Prov. 20:28 (Gr.); 29:14; 31:5, 8.

[3] See also Prov. 17:21; 21:15; 24:23 f.; 28:5, 21.

[4] Prov. 15:27; 27:23; 28:21.

There is not much evidence in the Proverbs of familiarity with the grosser forms of injustice, and such as exists is in the later parts of the book. For example, the most important passage bearing on the subject of violence is 1:10 ff., where the allurements by which the thoughtless are led into crime are more briefly, but quite as vividly, described as the wiles of the strange woman in the seventh chapter.[1] The end, too, is as strongly depicted:

> They lie in wait for their own blood,
> They lurk privily for their own lives.[2]

The teaching of 21:7 is to the same effect. It says,

> The violence of the wicked shall sweep them away,
> Because they refuse to do justice.[3]

The oppression of the weak by the powerful is represented as not only wicked but disastrous. A king who offends in this respect[4] is "lacking in intelligence":

> For Yahweh will plead their cause,
> And despoil of life their despoilers.[5]

In general the Proverbs condemn those who entertain the thought of injuring their fellows in any respect. Thus, in 6:16 ff. among other things that Yahweh especially hates is

> A heart that deviseth wicked schemes.[6]

[1] See also Prov. 16:29.

[2] Prov. 1:18.

[3] See further Prov. 3:31; 6:17.

[4] Prov. 28:3, 15.

[5] Prov. 28:16; 22:22 f.; also 14:31; 22:16; 28:3; 30:14. In 14:31 the term "slave" is probably not to be taken literally.

[6] See also Prov. 12:2; 14:22; 15:26; 21:10; 24:8.

The rule laid down for the wise and good man is,

> Devise not evil against thy neighbor,
> Seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.[1]

He is warned that

> Whoso rewardeth evil for good,
> Evil shall not depart from his house;[2]

and exhorted, not only not to harbor resentment against those who have injured him,[3] but even to seek to overcome evil with good. Says 25:21 f.,

> If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat,
> If he be thirsty, give him to drink;
> Thus shalt thou heap coals of fire on his head,
> And Yahweh will reward thee.

This is a remarkable passage, but not so remarkable as 10:12, for the love that is there recommended is a sentiment unmixed with prudence that "covereth all transgressions."[4]

In the proverb last cited love is the preventive for strife, which seemed to the sages a great evil.[5] The causes they assign for it are greed,[6] pride,[7] irascibility,[8] pugnacity,[9] malevolence,[10] talebearing,[11] and insolence.[12] The fool, being what he is, is forever quarreling,[13] but the wise man, if he cannot find a way of composing differences, as, for example, by lot,[14] considers it, not a

[1] Prov. 3:29.
[2] Prov. 17:13.
[3] Prov. 20:22; 24:17, 29.
[4] I Pet. 4:8.
[5] Prov. 17:14, 19.
[6] Prov. 28:25.
[7] Prov. 13:10; 17:19.
[8] Prov. 15:18; 29:22.
[9] Prov. 26:21; 30:33.
[10] Prov. 10:12.
[11] Prov. 16:28; 26:20.
[12] Prov. 22:10.
[13] Prov. 18:6.
[14] Prov. 18:18.

reproach, but an honor "to pass over a transgression."[1] Naturally, it is as reprehensible to sow discord as to take part in the resulting quarrel.[2]

There are in the Proverbs only a few references to the rights of property. One passage,[3] in which robbery of the poor is forbidden, has already been cited in another connection. There are others showing that, when they were written, theft was considered disgraceful. According to 6:30 f., even when a man stole to satisfy hunger, he was obliged to "return sevenfold," if it took "all the substance of his house."[4] The partner of a thief, even if he succeeds in hiding his complicity, is warned that he "hateth his own soul," that is, tempts God to destroy him.

Here belongs the prohibition of the removal of landmarks,[5] especially those of orphans,[6] borrowed from the Deuteronomic Code.[7] In that code, also, it is forbidden to use the diverse weights and measures[8] of which this book, no fewer than three times,[9] declares that they are "an abomination to Yahweh." The sages, however, go farther and condemn the buyer who depreciates the goods he is trying to purchase, saying,

> It is bad, it is bad, ...
> But, when he is gone his way, he boasteth

of his bargain.[10]

The social duties thus far discussed may be viewed as so many manifestations of the cardinal virtue of

[1] Prov. 19:11; also 3:30; 20:3.
[2] Prov. 6:14, 19; 11:9.
[3] Prov. 22:22.
[4] See also Prov. 30:9.
[5] Prov. 22:28.
[6] Prov. 23:10.
[7] Deut. 19:14.
[8] Deut. 25:13 ff.
[9] Prov. 11:1; 20:10, 23.
[10] Prov. 20:14.

righteousness. There is another class that are phases of a second quality, equally prominent in the Proverbs, the Hebrew word for which is generally rendered "truth," but which often, as has elsewhere been shown, has the broader meaning of "trustworthiness." It has various synonyms, one of which occurs in 30:5 f., where the word of God is described as "refined," that is, pure. There are a number in 8:6–9, where Wisdom says of her instruction:

> Hear, for I speak verities,
> And my open lips things that are correct.
> For my mouth uttereth truth,
> And wicked lips are an abomination to me.
> All the words of my mouth are just,
> There is nothing in them wrong or awry.
> They are all right to him that understandeth,
> And correct to those that find knowledge.[1]

Trustworthiness is one of the three virtues by which kings attain and retain their power,[2] and it is equally necessary in the lowliest subject who would find favor with God or man.[3] Hence the disciple is advised to "buy the truth," that is, in the language of Paul, "whatsoever things are true,"[4] assured that they will endure, while all that is false must speedily perish.[5] He is also exhorted to cherish genuine friendships, remembering that, although

> There are friends for companionship,
> There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.[6]

[1] See also Prov. 22:21.

[2] Prov. 20:28.

[3] Prov. 3:33; 16:6.

[4] Prov. 23:23.

[5] Prov. 12:19, 22.

[6] Prov. 18:24. See also 17:17; 27:10.

These passages are clear and convincing, but they by no means measure the importance given to trustworthiness by the Hebrew sages. An adequate idea on the subject can only be obtained by considering how much space is given in the Proverbs to the exposure and condemnation of falsehood or untrustworthiness in its various manifestations.

First of all, there are the deception that seals the lips of the wicked while they are planning the discomfiture of the righteous,[1] and the treachery which, "like a bad tooth or a weak foot,"[2] hides itself until confidence will be most disastrous. In 23:28 "the strange woman" is charged with multiplying traitors. Here the word "traitor" may mean an unfaithful husband, but, since it is repeatedly used of a wicked man, it is probable that in this case it denotes one who has repudiated the claims of religion and morality. This distinction, however, is not important, since the traitors of the general type are consigned to destruction.[3]

The untrustworthy of the Book of Proverbs are mostly such as have sinned with their mouths. There is, first, the simple liar. Now, as has repeatedly been noted, the earlier Hebrews did not condemn simple falsehood. The later literature, however, reveals a growing sensitiveness on the subject. This book is especially emphatic in condemnation of "a lying tongue," which, according to 6:17 is another of the seven things "that Yahweh hateth."[4] Good men also

[1] Prov. 12:5, 20. [2] Prov. 25:19.

[3] Prov. 2:22; 11:3, 6; 13:2, 15; 21:18; 22:12.

[4] See also Prov. 12:22.

hate a lie,[1] and shrink from the thought of telling one,[2] knowing that it brings its own punishment,[3] and that therefore the truthful man, though poor, has no occasion to envy the rich liar.[4]

A false witness, as has been shown, was always an abomination to the Hebrews. It is not strange, therefore, to find him also among the things especially offensive to Yahweh.[5] He is the more severely condemned because by his testimony he seeks to, and often actually does, defeat the ends of justice.[6] He is therefore a menace to the community in which he lives,[7] and will certainly in the end receive his deserts.[8]

Flattery, which is sometimes regarded as a harmless form of deception, is forbidden because it is seldom profitable to the one who employs it[9] and often very injurious to a susceptible object.[10]

On hypocrisy one cannot do better than to let the book speak for itself by quoting *in extenso* 26:23–26. It reads:

> Like drossy silver laid upon pottery
> Are flattering lips and a bad heart.
> With his lips an enemy dissembleth,
> While within him he holdeth deceit.
> When he speaketh graciously, trust him not;
> For there are seven abominations in his heart.
> Whoso covereth hatred with guile,
> His wickedness shall be exposed.

Last, but not least, among oral offenses are two that are not clearly distinguished, namely, tale-bearing and

[1] Prov. 13:5; 17:7.
[2] Prov. 30:8.
[3] Prov. 12:19.
[4] Prov. 19:22.
[5] Prov. 6:19.
[6] Prov. 12:17; 14:25; 19:18.
[7] Prov. 25:18.
[8] Prov. 19:5, 9; 21:28; also 24:28.
[9] Prov. 28:23.
[10] Prov. 26:28b; 27:14; 29:5.

slander. On the former may be cited certain passages of which 25:7b–8 is a good example. It reads:

> What thy eyes have seen
> Make not hastily public.
> What wilt thou do in the end
> When thy neighbor putteth thee to shame?

Here the motive for refraining from telling stories, even true ones, prejudicial to a neighbor, is the would-be tattler's regard for his own reputation.[1] There is another series of passages in which the offense is clearly slander. One of them is 16:27, which declares that

> With his mouth the godless destroyeth his neighbor.

In all these, except 18:8 (26:22), where the natural appetite for slander is depicted, it is the harm to the slandered to which attention is directed.[2]

The third of the great social virtues by which the ideal king,[3] and, indeed, the ideal man, is characterized is kindness.[4] By it, as by trustworthiness or faithfulness, one finds "favor with God and man."[5]

In the passages cited the proper objects of the virtue in question are not specified. This fact does not warrant the inference that the sages had in mind a mere sentiment toward men in general. The usage with reference to the word rendered "kindness" forbids such a supposition. The word implies a need which, whether it is put into words or remains mute, appeals to those who

[1] See also Prov. 17:9; 25:9, 23; 30:10.

[2] See also Prov. 11:13; 16:27, 28, 30; 26:20, 28; 29:12.

[3] Prov. 20:28.

[4] Prov. 3:3; 31:26.

[5] Prov. 3:4; also 2:8; 11:17; 16:6; 19:22; 21:21.

have the benevolent disposition and, when they have a corresponding ability, receives a response in the form of sympathetic activity. Hence it is used, especially in the Psalms, of the intervention of Yahweh for the benefit of his creatures,[1] and throughout the Old Testament of the readiness of human beings, whatever their station, to lend a hand in an emergency.[2] In the Proverbs it has the latter meaning, which appears very clearly in 11:17, where the antithesis of "kind" is "cruel." If, however, active sympathy is required in the temporary disturbances to which human happiness is subject, it certainly is a more imperative duty toward the unfortunate classes. This is the teaching of the Proverbs. In the first place, the well-to-do are expressly forbidden to take advantage of those who are more or less dependent by oppressing them,[3] robbing them of their scant possessions,[4] or charging them discount or interest on money and other things that they are compelled to borrow.[5]

The poor are also especially commended to the charity of those who are able to relieve their wants. The ultimate ground for the sympathy required is that

> The rich and the poor meet together,
> Yahweh is the maker of them all.[6]

The moral standing of a man may be determined by his treatment of this obligation. Says 29:7,

> The righteous regardeth the cause of the poor,
> The wicked hath no mind to regard it.

[1] Ps. 33:4 f.
[2] I Sam. 20:8, 14 f.; II Sam. 10:2.
[3] Prov. 14:31.
[4] Prov. 22:22.
[5] Prov. 28:8.
[6] Prov. 22:2. See also 29:13.

The disciple is warned not to imitate the latter in 3:27 f.:

> Withhold not help from him that deserveth it(?),
> When it is in thy power to act.
> Say not to thy neighbor, Go, and come again,
> And tomorrow I will give, when thou hast aught by thee.[1]

On the other hand, he is encouraged in an opposite course by repeated assurances of the divine favor. One of the most familiar of the passages bearing on this point is 19:17,

> He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to Yahweh,
> And a due reward will he pay him.[2]

The same end is sought in the description of the ideal man[3] and the ideal woman[4] as givers; also in the comparison,

> Clouds and wind, but no rain—
> Such is he that boasteth of gifts ungiven.[5]

Little is said in the Proverbs concerning the widow and the orphan, but according to 15:25 and 23:10 f., their property is under the special protection of Yahweh.

Here, no doubt, belong 24:11 f., where he whom it concerns is exhorted to

> Deliver those that are being haled to death,
> And rescue those that are staggering to be slain,

and, in case he is inclined to excuse himself from interfering, is warned that he cannot thus easily escape responsibility:

> If thou sayest, I knew naught thereof,
> Will not he that weigheth hearts perceive?
> Nay, he that keepeth watch on thy soul will know,
> And he will render to every man according as he acteth.

[1] See also Prov. 17:5; 21:13.

[2] See also Prov. 11:24, 25, 26; 14:21, 31; 22:9; 28:27.

[3] Prov. 21:26. [4] Prov. 31:20. [5] Prov. 25:14.

The situation is not clear. There are some who maintain that those who are to be rescued are persons who have been tried and found guilty, and interpret the exhortation as a protest against capital punishment. So Delitzsch. But it is more probable that they are the intended victims of violence, and that, therefore, the passage, like Exod. 23:2, is a demand for law and order, and protection under them for the humblest member of the community.

Finally the sages taught that the righteous could be distinguished from the wicked by their treatment of dumb animals, for

> The righteous man regardeth the life of his beast,
> But the mercy of the wicked is cruel.[1]

The absence in the Proverbs of any reference to the foreigner is noteworthy, but easily explained: Wisdom's appeal is to "the sons of men" and not to or for any nationality.[2]

[1] Prov. 12:10. [2] Prov. 8:4.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

There is no book in the Old Testament about which and its value there have been more widely different opinions than "the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's." It doubtless owes its place in the Canon to the belief that it was written by Solomon, and that it was the intention of the royal author thereby to depict the blissfully intimate relation between Yahweh and his people. This is the thought that the Jews found in it when they read it on the eighth day of the feast of the Passover.

The allegorical interpretation was adopted by the early Christians, and it continued for many centuries to be the almost unchallenged opinion in all branches of the church. Indeed, it is only within recent times that its correctness has been widely questioned or rejected.

The Song of Songs, taken as an allegory, becomes an almost purely religious production, with an ethical element showing itself in the faithfulness of the symbolical pair to the covenant between them. The ethical element is brought into prominence by a modern interpretation according to which, in its most developed form, the book is a dramatic poem picturing the futile efforts of the historical Solomon to win a humble but beautiful maiden from an equally humble lover; and those who adopt this or any similar interpretation contend that this ethical quality justifies the retention of the book in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The latest view is that the Song of Solomon is not a dramatic unit, but a collection of lyrics such as are still sung during the festive week that follows a wedding in some parts of Syria, where the newly wedded pair are crowned and treated as king and queen by their friends and neighbors. If this is correct, it is clear, in the first place, that the severity with which the book has sometimes been criticized must be considerably mitigated, since language and relations that would be immoral between mere lovers become permissible when the parties concerned have been united in marriage. On the other hand, it can hardly be said that the book was intended to teach an ethical or religious lesson or lessons. The compiler of it seems to have been actuated by a desire to preserve and recommend to others the pieces of which it is composed, chiefly for their literary excellence and their influence toward the perpetuation of an immemorial custom. If, therefore, these songs have any ethical significance, it is only incidental and naturally confined to the subjects of woman and marriage.

The first thing that strikes one, when reading the book, is the absence of any allusion to the virtual sale of girls by their fathers to their prospective husbands among the Hebrews. In fact, the whole tone of the book is such as almost to suggest a question whether, when the songs originated, this custom still prevailed. It is an intense desire for each other that binds the young couple together, and, according to 2:10–14, this mutual affection existed before they were united in marriage. See also the dream of 3:1–4, but especially that of 5:2 ff., in which he tells of wandering at night sleepless

from love and she confesses herself "sick" with an answering longing. Doubtless, when a young man and a young woman were found to have chosen each other, their relatives usually indorsed their choice, realizing that, as the bride in 8:6 declares,

> Love is strong as death,
> A passion as resistless as Sheol.

The passage just partly quoted is significant as an indication, not only of the influence of personal preference in marriages among the Hebrews, but also of the character of the "love" by which men and women were sometimes, at least, brought together. There is so much said in other parts of the book about the physical charms of both of the principal personages, and their sensuous delight in each other, that often the term seems to mean little more than sexual attraction. Here, however, it is clearly something higher and nobler; for it is only love in its highest manifestations of which it can be said that

> Water cannot quench it,
> Nor do rivers drown it;
> If one offer all the wealth of one's house
> For love, they will utterly reject it.[1]

It is easy to imagine the effect of a genuine affection between husbands and wives. In the first place, the existence of such a bond would naturally prevent men from taking more than one wife, except when the first was barren; and even then there would be some who would "go childless" rather than introduce a rival to the unfortunate woman into the family. There are passages

[1] Song of Sol. 8:7.

in these songs that point to such an effect. One of them is the line by the bride,

> My beloved is mine, and I am his,

in 2:16, repeated with variations in 6:3 and 7:10; but the most pointed is 6:8 f., where, according to Budde, one should read,

> Solomon had sixty queens,
> And eighty concubines,
> And maidens numberless;
> My dove, the faultless, is one.

A sentiment of this sort leaves no room for polygamy.

A second effect of love of the higher quality would be to lift women as a class toward man's level. It is not strange, therefore, that in this book there is found no trace of inequality between the sexes. The bridegroom is as extravagant in praise of the bride as she is in describing his perfections. He is "altogether lovely,"[1] and she is not only always the "fairest among women,"[2] but, in her power over him, "terrible as an army with banners."[3] The duration of mutual admiration in any given case would, of course, depend upon the possession by the parties concerned of internal qualities corresponding to their external attractions.

[1] Song of Sol. 5:16.

[2] Song of Sol. 1:8.

[3] Song of Sol. 6:4.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE BOOKS OF CHRONICLES, EZRA, AND NEHEMIAH

In the Hebrew Bible Ezra and Nehemiah precede the Books of Chronicles; but this order should be reversed, as it is in the English Version, since it is perfectly plain, not only that all these books came from the same source, but that they once formed a continuous history. The date to which they are assigned is toward the beginning of the Greek period, or about three hundred years before the Christian era. There was then an abundance of material of one kind and another for a history of the Hebrews, for the succession of historical books from Genesis to Kings inclusive had long been completed, and there were other lesser works of a similar character, to say nothing of the prophetical books with their vivid pictures of contemporary affairs and conditions. The Chronicler, however, did not draw upon all the sources available or treat the material he used as a modern historian would have treated it. He was a Levite, and his object was to glorify Jerusalem and its temple, but especially to magnify the importance of the guild that furnished the music in the ritual of the sanctuary. It is the narrowness of his purpose which accounts for the fact that the first nine chapters of his work consist of a series of genealogies and it is only when he comes to the end of Saul's unhappy reign that he begins the narrative proper. It also explains why, at every opportunity, he introduces the Levites, and

often, so far as can be determined, without warrant from earlier authorities. The following is a list of the more important examples of this practice, with the passages in the books of Samuel and Kings to which the Chronicler was indebted for the main points in his narrative: I Chron., chaps. 15 f. (II Sam. 6:12 ff.); chaps. 23–29 (I Kings 2:1 ff.); II Chron., chaps. 5 f. (I Kings 8); 20:1–30 (II Kings 3); chap. 23 (II Kings 11:4–20); 24:4–14 (II Kings 12:4–16); 29:3—31:21 (II Kings 18:4); 34:8–13 (II Kings 22:3–7); 35:1–19 (II Kings 23:21–23); Neh. 9.

One cannot study the passages cited and their parallels without suspecting the Chronicler's reliability as a historian. There are other indications that are equally damaging. In the first place, there are many passages in which he is guilty of evident exaggeration. The most notable are the following:

I Chron. 19:6 f., where the Ammonites are reported to have hired 32,000 chariots at an expense of 1,000 talents of silver, or about $1,952,000.

I Chron. 21:5, where the number of warriors in Judah and Israel, exclusive of Levi and Benjamin, is given as 1,500,000, representing a population of perhaps 6,000,000.

I Chron. 22:14, where David is said to have provided for the ornamentation of the temple 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 of silver, the value of which would be about $4,910,000,000.

I Chron. 29:4, where David's private contribution to the fund for the temple is reported to have been 3,000 talents of gold and 7,000 of silver, or about $101,504,000.

I Chron. 29:7, where the sum of the offerings of the notables for the same fund is 5,000 talents and 10,000 darics of gold and 10,000 talents of silver, or about $165,973,680.

II Chron. 13:3, 17, where the army of Abijah is said to have consisted of 400,000, and that of Jeroboam I of 800,000 men, the number of Israel's slain being no less than 500,000.

II Chron. 14:8 f., where Asa's army numbers 580,000, and that of the invading Ethiopians 1,000,000 men.

II Chron. 17:14 ff., where the strength of Jehoshaphat's army is reported to have been 1,120,000 men.

II Chron. 28:6 ff., where Pekah, when he invaded Judah, is said to have slain "in Judah 120,000, all of them valiant men, in one day," and carried away captive 200,000 women and children.

It is evident, too, that the Chronicler has suppressed much that conflicted with his idea of the history of his people. The most notable of these omissions occurs in his account of the reign of David. Thus, although he copies from II Sam., chaps. 10 ff., the main features of the siege and capture of Rabbath Ammon, with only slight modifications, except with reference to the number of Syrians who came to the support of the Ammonites, he omits any reference to the double crime of the Hebrew king against Uriah the Hittite recorded in II Sam. 11:2 ff. He is equally silent concerning the story of Rizpah,[1] the rebellion of Absalom, together with the troubles that immediately preceded and followed it,[2] and the unseemly rivalry between Solomon and Adonijah by which David's last days

[1] II Sam. 21:1 ff.

[2] II Sam. 13:1—20:22.

were clouded.[1] The same is true of the account of Solomon's removal of Joab, Adonijah, and Shimei,[2] the apostasy of Solomon and the adversaries that plagued his later years.[3]

Finally there are cases in which the Chronicler has intentionally changed statements of earlier writers. Thus, while II Sam. 21:19 says that it was a Bethlehemite by the name of Elhanan who slew Goliath of Gath, the Chronicler in I Chron. 20:5, evidently for the purpose of harmonizing this statement with I Sam., chap. 17, says that the man slain by Elhanan was Lahmi a brother of the Philistine champion. See also I Chron. 21:1, where it is Satan, and not, as in II Sam. 24:1, Yahweh, who incites David to number his people; II Chron. 8:2, where the cities which, according to I Kings 9:12 f., Solomon gave to Hiram of Tyre are described as "the cities which Huram had given to Solomon"; II Chron., chap. 13, where Abijah, who, in I Kings 15:3 f., is accused of walking "in all the sins of his father," is represented as an especial favorite of Yahweh; II Chron. 21:20, where the statement of II Kings 8:24, that Jehoram of Judah "was buried with his fathers in the city of David," is directly contradicted; II Chron. 20:36, where the Chronicler, to account for the shipwreck of Jehoshaphat's fleet, says that he accepted the invitation of Ahaziah of Israel, which I Kings 22:41 says that he declined; and Ezra 4:7 ff., where a story relating to the restoration of the wall of Jerusalem is incorporated into an account of the erection of the second temple.

[1] I Kings, chap. 1.

[2] I Kings, chap. 3.

[3] I Kings 11:1–40.

Other instances of violence done by the Chronicler to his sources might be cited, and other forms of evidence presented, but enough has been adduced to show that his methods were such as no genuine historian would either employ or countenance, and that, consequently, the books attributed to him cannot, in themselves, be regarded as trustworthy sources of information on the history of the Chosen People. This fact has, of course, a bearing on the subject of the ethical development of the Hebrews, but its real significance may easily be misunderstood. It is true that one cannot go to these books expecting always to find reliable data for determining the degree of ethical progress made by the Hebrews at any time during the long period covered by the narrative, since, as has been shown, it has comparatively little material of this kind to offer, and such as it has is liable to be worthless for the given purpose; but the case is different when the work is viewed simply as a product of the Greek period and studied as a mirror of the ethical ideas of the author, and doubtless of many of his Jewish contemporaries.

Treating it thus the reader will at once begin to see that the author, in spite of his lawless methods, regarded himself as an ethical teacher, and that, although his ideas are sometimes mistaken, his pretensions are not without foundation.

In the first place, he believed with all his heart in a moral order. He was utterly impervious to the doubts on the subject that show themselves in Jeremiah's confessions, and burst into unrestrained expression in the Book of Job. Moreover, he inferred, as did Job's friends, that suffering implied sin, and undertook to

show how the principal figures in his narrative incurred the misfortunes from which they suffered. Thus, in I Chron. 5:1 he explains the transfer of the birthright from Reuben to Joseph by recalling Gen. 35:22, where the former is reported to have "defiled his father's couch." In his treatment of the Hebrew, more precisely the Judean, monarchy he goes beyond the compiler of the Books of Kings, who is generally content with passing judgment on each of the kings of Judah and Israel, leaving the reader to connect the events narrated with the conduct of the characters involved. The following list of instances will abundantly illustrate his method:

Shishak, the king of Egypt "came up against Jerusalem, because they (Rehoboam and his people) had trespassed against Yahweh"; II Chron. 12:1 f.; cf. I Kings 14:22 ff.

Asa had repeated wars and suffered greatly from disease, because he appealed to human helpers rather than Yahweh; II Chron. 16:7 ff.; cf. I Kings 15:16 ff.

Jehoshaphat's fleet was destroyed to punish him for joining himself with Ahaziah, king of Israel, in a commercial enterprise; II Chron. 20:35 ff.; cf. I Kings 22:48 f.

Jehoram was afflicted in various ways, because he was disloyal to Yahweh and slew his brethren and others with the sword; II Chron. 21:12 ff.; cf. II Kings 8:18 ff.

Ahaziah fell in the revolution at Jezreel, because "he went to Joram" of Israel; II Chron. 22:7 ff.; cf. II Kings 8:25 ff.; 9:27 f.

Jehoash was assassinated, after an invasion by the

Syrians, "for the blood of the son of Jehoiada"; II Chron. 24:20 ff.; cf. II Kings 12:17 ff.

Amaziah was assassinated, because he "turned away from following Yahweh"; II Chron. 25:14–16, 27; cf. II Kings 14:7, 19.

Uzziah was smitten with leprosy, because he undertook to usurp the office of a priest; II Chron. 26:16 ff.; cf. II Kings 15:5 ff.

Ahaz was delivered into the hands of the neighboring peoples, because he "trespassed sore against Yahweh"; II Chron. 28:1 ff.; cf. II Kings 16:1 ff.

The wrath of Yahweh was upon Hezekiah, because "his heart was lifted up," and "he rendered not again according to the benefit done him"; II Chron. 32:24 f.; cf. II Kings 20:12 ff.

Manasseh was delivered into the hands of the Assyrians, because he served other gods; II Chron.; 33:10 f.; cf. II Kings 21:10–15.

Amon, who did not repent of his misdeeds, met a violent death; II Chron. 33:21 ff.; cf. II Kings 21:19 ff.

Josiah was killed in battle, because he would not listen to a warning against interfering with Necho, the king of Egypt, on his march against Carchemish; II Chron. 35:20 ff.; cf. II Kings 23:29 f.

Jehoiakim, who "did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh," was dethroned and carried into captivity; II Chron. 36:5–8; cf. II Kings 23:36 ff.;

Jehoiachin, who followed his father's example, suffered the same fate; II Chron. 36:9 f.; cf. II Kings 24:8 ff.

Zedekiah, also, was dethroned and deported, because he did evil in the sight of Yahweh and broke faith with

the king of Babylon; II Chron. 36:11 ff.; II Kings 24:18 f.

If the parallel passages above cited be examined, it will be found that the Chronicler finds occasion for criticism in five more cases than the Deuteronomist, namely, those of Asa, Jehoash, Amaziah, Uzziah, and Josiah, in four of which misfortune is expressly connected with the act or acts condemned; that there are six other cases, namely, those of Rehoboam, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Ahaz, and Josiah, in which, although the Deuteronomist does not connect misfortunes that are related with the conduct of these kings, the Chronicler makes such a connection; and that there are only three cases, namely, those of Amon, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin, in which the older narrative is not modified in this respect.

It will also be found that, in the passages cited from the Books of Chronicles, the author judges the persons involved according to the Priests' Code, which, it will be remembered, teaches that its ritual as well as its moral precepts were promulgated at Sinai, and that both alike are binding on all Hebrews. Thus, he is just as severe on Uzziah for swinging a censer as on Manasseh for worshiping idols or Jehoram for murdering his own brothers.

The Chronicler betrays his ethical position, not only in his modifications of, but in his omissions from, the earlier narratives. Reference has already been made to the liberties he takes with the accepted accounts of the reigns of David and Solomon. The explanation is easy. David had long been the national hero. The story of his life and exploits had more than once been

rewritten, and deeds that he had done suppressed, while some that he had not done were attributed to him. The Chronicler followed the same method, and for the same reason, as his predecessors. He was interested in the temple at Jerusalem and all that pertained to it; so deeply interested that he could not believe David, the national idol, to have left the honor of at least making all possible preparation for the erection of the sanctuary and the maintenance of worship therein to his son Solomon. He therefore gave the king credit, not only for collecting the vast amounts of gold and silver and other metals above noted, but for organizing the various guilds into which the Levites in his own time were divided. On the other hand, because the ethics of the time condemned some of the things that the great king had done or permitted, the Chronicler omitted, not only the faults of which he stood accused, but the misfortunes which would naturally be interpreted as penalties for unrecorded transgressions. He made one exception, the story of the census and the pestilence that followed, I Chron. 21:1 ff. This passage was doubtless preserved because it belonged to the story of the temple, and the compiler thought he could prevent the reader from misusing it by introducing, as the tempter, instead of Yahweh, Satan, who had now become a definite personality hostile to God and his purposes.

It required a twofold violence to transform David from a very real man into a very unreal saint. The process was simpler in the case of his successor. He had always enjoyed the honor of having built the temple as well as having possessed extraordinary

wisdom. It was therefore only necessary for the Chronicler to suppress the record of his weakness for foreign women, their influence over him, and the adversaries that Yahweh "raised up" against him, to secure for him also recognition as a saint among those for whom the Books of Chronicles were written.

Thus far the object has been to present the Chronicler's general position as a teacher of morals among the Jews in the early part of the third century B.C. It remains to discuss some special points on which his work furnishes further information.

The subject of slavery is one of them. From the earliest times, it will be remembered, there were native as well as foreign slaves among the Hebrews, the former being persons who were held in bondage for a limited period for debts that they could pay only by personal service;[1] but there was a tendency to make the lot of all such unfortunates as tolerable as possible under the circumstances.[2] Jeremiah went so far as to demand that all the Hebrews in bondage in his day be liberated and that thereafter "no Jew should make a bondman of his brother," and for a time the people allowed him to have his way; but they repented of their humanity and "caused the servants and the handmaids whom they had let go free to return" to subjection;[3] and it remained for Nehemiah effectually to protest against the enslavement of Hebrews for debt.[4] To the Chronicler, also, the idea of compulsory service for Hebrews was abhorrent. Therefore in his account of the reign of Solomon, instead of adopting the statement of I

[1] Exod. 21:2 ff.
[2] Deut. 15:12 ff.; Lev. 25:35 ff.
[3] Jer. 34:8 ff.
[4] Neh. 5:6 ff.

Kings 5:13 to the effect that the men by whom the wood and stone required for the temple were prepared and transported were raised by "a levy out of all Israel," he takes pains to inform his readers that the 153,600 men so employed were "the sojourners that were in the land of Israel." See II Chron. 2:17 f.; also 8:9, where he copies from I Kings 9:22 the declaration that "of the children of Israel Solomon made no servants for his work." There is another passage that is interesting in this connection, namely, II Chron. 28:8 ff., which tells how, when Pekah carried away captive from Judah 200,000 women and children, whom he would have sold into slavery, the prophet Oded protested and "certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim" forbade him to bring them into their country for that purpose, lest Yahweh's wrath toward Israel be increased. Here the Chronicler is simply carrying back more than four centuries the opposition to Hebrew slavery that prevailed in the Greek period.

In this connection it should be noted that in the passage cited from Nehemiah's memoirs the governor appeals to the Jews, not only to restore the security they have taken from one another for debts, but to cancel the debts themselves, as they were required to do in the year of release.[1]

The only other topic that requires particular attention is the attitude of the Chronicler toward foreigners. The passages, II Chron. 2:17 f. and 8:9, in which, following I Kings 9:22, he teaches that the levy raised by Solomon was among the remnant of the tribes

[1] Neh. 5:9 ff.; Deut. 15:1 ff. In Neh. 5:11, for "the hundredth part" read, with Geiger, "the loan." See Deut. 24:10.

subdued by the Hebrews when they invaded Canaan, have already been cited. They betray an attitude toward Gentiles that becomes more pronounced in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. In these books, to be sure, some of the references to other peoples are put into the mouths of the principal characters, and one of them, at least, must have come from some source not the Chronicler, but the passage of most importance seems to be from his pen. It is the tenth chapter of Ezra. In the ninth, as in the eighth, the scribe is represented as speaking in his own person, a fact which favors the supposition that the sentiments there expressed are properly attributed to him. There are those, however, who insist that the literary form of these chapters is only a mask behind which the compiler is freely drawing upon his imagination. There is even greater reason for suspecting something of the kind in chap. 10, where the form of the memoir is abandoned and the narrative proceeds as usual. It is probable, therefore, that the Jews in the time of Ezra had not taken foreign wives in such numbers as the Chronicler would have one believe, or, if they had, that the scribe did not adopt the drastic and inhuman policy of dissolving all such marriages and condemning hundreds of women and children to want and misery, especially since, according to Neh. 13:23, the governor in a precisely similar case was content with handling some of the men rather roughly, banishing the most prominent offenders, and requiring the rest to promise under oath that they would not thenceforth permit intermarriage with the surrounding peoples. This being the case, it is the Chronicler, and not Ezra, who

is to be blamed; and the sensitive reader will condemn him pretty severely, unless he stops to consider that this Chronicler was a closet historian, who, like the Deuteronomic reviser of the Book of Joshua, could calmly describe the destruction of human beings by the thousand, but might have shrunk from harming one of them, except with his pen. For further indications of his (literary) attitude, see Ezra 6:21; Neh. 9:2; 10:28.

CHAPTER XXX

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

In 1:12 of this book the author calls himself "the Preacher" and "king over Israel in Jerusalem." In harmony with these appellations the book itself is described in its title as "The Words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem," and in the past it has been accepted by Christians as well as Jews as a work of Solomon. The evidence, however, from both its language and its content is to the effect that the author lived in the Greek period, and that the name he assumes is a literary disguise too transparent to be taken seriously. This much is generally admitted. On the integrity of the book there is wide difference of opinion, some attributing it to a single unstable author, while others distribute its contents among several different contributors. The safer theory seems to be that the deviations from the general trend of the work, which it is easy enough to discover, are due to the attempts of one or more revisers to bring it into harmony with the ethical teaching prevalent in their day, or, at least, in the class or party to which they belonged.

Perhaps it will be best to begin the examination of the book with the interpolated passages, or such of them as have an ethical bearing. There is naturally nothing new in them. They teach the simple doctrines found in the earlier Hebrew Scriptures. In the first place they all imply the righteousness of God, and 7:29

asserts, apparently on the authority of Gen. 1:21, that he "made man upright." He holds men accountable for their actions. He will bring "into judgment" both the righteous and the wicked.[1] There is no hint of the slightest doubt about the outcome of the trial. The righteous are assured that their righteousness will have its reward in the present life;[2] that, in fact, "whoso keepeth the commandment shall know nothing evil."[3] The wicked, on the other hand, are as confidently warned that they are always exposed to evil,[4] and that, however often they may escape, they cannot hope to prolong their days like the righteous or enjoy equally certain and enduring prosperity.[5]

Such is the teaching of the reviser, or revisers, to whose well-meant but confusing additions, and the potency of the fame of Solomon, the book doubtless owes its place in the Hebrew canon. That of the original writing was very different. Not that the author denies God, or, as is sometimes inferred, ignores moral considerations. He repeatedly recognizes a divine Cause. It is God to whom he attributes the frame of things and the current of events in which he finds himself involved,[6] also the blessings he enjoys[7] and the impulses by which he is prompted in his various activities.[8] The works of God, although he cannot understand them, fill him with awe,[9] and, when he goes to the house of God, as is his custom, he does so with a humble and reverent heart.[10] He would not

[1] Eccles. 3:17; 11:9b; 12:14.
[2] Eccles. 17:12, 18b, 19.
[3] Eccles. 8:5.
[4] Eccles. 7:6.
[5] Eccles. 2:26; 8:12.
[6] Eccles. 3:14 f.; 7:13 f.
[7] Eccles. 5:19; 6:2.
[8] Eccles. 1:13; 3:10.
[9] Eccles. 3:14.
[10] Eccles. 5:1 f.

willingly offend this august Being, since, if he did, he would expect to suffer, and that severely, from his anger.[1]

The ethical position of the Preacher is more difficult to determine. He certainly cannot be accused of conscious neglect of moral considerations. On the contrary, he clearly distinguishes between the righteous and the wicked, and more than once protests against the neglect of this distinction.[2] He is so sensitive in this regard, and criticizes so severely the morals of his day, that he has become the representative of pessimism in the Hebrew Scriptures. He condemns luxury and intemperance.[3] Naturally the abuses most characteristic of the Orient, injustice and oppression, receive special attention. He laments the prevalence of wickedness among judges and the consequent violence to justice and equity,[4] and the abuse of power by which rulers make life intolerable for their unfortunate subjects.[5] He arraigns mankind in general in 7:20, where he complains that "there is not a righteous man on earth that doeth good and sinneth not," and in 7:28, where, after telling how earnestly he has sought men and women worthy of the name, he declares, "One man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among as many have I not found."

The Preacher in his researches gave thought, not only to moral but to physical evils, and found life everywhere crossed by conditions so untoward that he was tempted to think it hardly worth living. Indeed,

[1] Eccles. 5:6 f.

[2] Eccles. 7:15 f.; 8:14; 9:2 f.

[3] Eccles. 10:17.

[4] Eccles. 3:16; 5:8.

[5] Eccles. 4:1; also 5:8; 8:9.

his last word, after he has rehearsed the disabilities of old age, is that "all is vanity." Now, those who went before him, and many, no doubt, in his own day, would have connected the ills that he lamented with the decadence of morals then prevailing, and said in so many words that he and the rest of the sufferers were simply paying the penalty of their offenses against a righteous God. The Preacher, like Job, repudiates this time-honored doctrine. He declares repeatedly that, so far as he can discover, there is no necessary connection between a man's character and his earthly fortunes. Thus, he says of the righteous: "The righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God; whether it be love or hatred (that they will procure him from his Maker) man knoweth not";[1] and of the wicked: "I have seen the wicked buried, carried even from the holy place. They were wont to go about boasting in the city where they had done thus."[2] There are two or three passages in which their uncertain fates are contrasted. One is 7:15: "There is a righteous man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness." This statement is repeated in substance in 8:14. It appears in an expanded form in 9:2, where the Preacher declares: "All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and clean and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not; as is the good, so is the sinner, and he that sweareth as he that feareth an oath." This, he adds, is so great an evil under the sun that "the hearts of the sons of men are full of misfortune, and

[1] Eccles. 9:1. [2] Eccles. 8:10.

madness is in their hearts while they live, and their end is death."

When Job found himself face to face with the problem here presented he was deeply troubled, but he took counsel of the divine in him and chose to suffer, even die an outcast from his kind, rather than lose the approval of his conscience. The Preacher was not a man of the strenuous type. This is clear from the confession with which he begins his book. Thus, he not only reckons his wealth as vanity in comparison with the "toil" with which he has taxed himself in mind and body to acquire it, but he says that he abandoned the search for wisdom because "in wisdom is much grief," and "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow"; an excuse which, if generally adopted, would prevent further progress and speedily reduce mankind to barbarism.

A man so averse to exertion could hardly be expected to have and maintain a high ethical standard. He would, of course, avoid the gross vices whose folly is unmistakable, but, when the path of virtue was rough or thorny, he would naturally compromise with his conscience and take an easier or pleasanter way. In point of fact, he proclaims this his policy by recommending it to his readers in 7:16 f., where he says: "Be not very righteous, neither show thyself excessively wise: why shouldst thou ruin thyself? Be not very wicked, neither be a fool: why shouldst thou die before thy time?" His ideal is comfort. He admits that the world is not so constituted as to permit the realization of this ideal, but there is comfort to be enjoyed, and, although he does not pretend to understand the

divine mind, he is able to convince himself that it is God's will that men should get out of life as much temperate enjoyment as possible. "There is nothing better for a man," he says in 2:24 f., "than that he should eat and drink, and give himself enjoyment in his toil; . . . . it is the gift of God; for who can eat, or who can enjoy,[1] apart from him?"[2] He naturally counts one especially fortunate whom God permits to enjoy life to the end. "Behold," he exclaims, "what I have seen! a good that is beautiful: it is to eat and drink, and see enjoyment, in all the labor that one does under the sun, all the days of the life that God giveth one; for it is one's portion. Every man, also, to whom God hath given wealth and riches, and power to eat thereof, and take his portion, and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God."[3] He warns his readers, however, that few can expect to enjoy themselves except in their youth.[4] The whole thought is more fully and attractively set forth in 9:7–10, where he counsels them: "Go, eat with joy thy bread, and drink with a merry heart thy wine, for already hath God accepted thy works. Let thy garments always be white, and let there be no lack of oil on thy head. Enjoy life with a woman that thou lovest, all the days of the vain life that God hath given thee under the sun, for it is thy portion in life and in the labor that thou hast to do under the sun. Everything that thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might, for there is no work,

[1] The Greek Version has "drink."

[2] The Greek reading; see also Eccles. 3:12 f., 22.

[3] Eccles. 5:18 f. See also 8:15.

[4] Eccles. 11:8.

or device, or knowledge, or wisdom in Sheol, whither thou art going."

The words just quoted sound so much like the teaching of Epicurus that the author of them has been supposed to have been a disciple of that philosopher; but it appears that the same ideas were current among the Babylonians centuries before the Greeks had a philosophy, being found in a fragment from the famous epic of Gilgamesh on a tablet supposed to be as old as 2000 B.C., which reads as follows:

> Since the gods created man,
> Death they ordained for man,
> Life in their hands they hold,
> Thou, O Gilgamesh, fill indeed thy belly,
> Day and night be thou joyful,
> Daily ordain gladness,
> Day and night rage and be merry.
> Let thy garments be bright,
> Thy head purify, wash with water,
> Desire thy children, which thy hand possesseth,
> A wife enjoy in thy bosom,
> Peaceably thy work . . . .

It is now tolerably clear what is the significance of the Book of Ecclesiastes in the history of Hebrew ethics. The original author represents those who, like Job, could no longer believe that men received their just deserts on earth, but who were so lacking in appreciation for the unseen and spiritual that, instead of taking refuge in the hope of immortality, as others were doing, they abandoned the problem of retribution and adopted a makeshift theory of life ethically not much better than that of the primitive Semites of Babylonia.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE BOOKS OF DANIEL AND ESTHER

I. DANIEL

The unity of the Book of Daniel has been, and still is, denied, some, with Torrey, dividing it between two authors, while others, like Barton, find traces of several (5) different hands in its composition; but there are good reasons for regarding it, with the exception, perhaps, of 9:4–20 and a few other verses, as the work of a single writer, and this view will here be taken for granted.

No one can read the book without being struck with the prominence given therein to the sovereignty of the God of the Hebrews. On his first appearance as an interpreter of dreams Daniel takes occasion to tell Nebuchadrezzar that "the kingdom, and the strength, and the glory" which he enjoys were given him by "the God of heaven,"[1] and later he predicts that the king will have to "eat grass like oxen" until he knows that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will."[2] Nebuchadrezzar finally, says the story, recognized the God of Daniel as the Supreme Ruler,[3] and so did Darius the Mede,[4] while Belshazzar, because he "humbled not" his heart before Yahweh, perished in his obstinacy. The same doctrine is taught in the second part of the book.[5]

[1] Dan. 2:37.
[2] Dan. 4:15.
[3] Dan. 4:37.
[4] Dan. 6:26.
[5] Dan. 7:12; 8:25; 9:27; 11:36, 45.

This, however, is not all, for Nebuchadrezzar confesses, not only that Yahweh "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth,"[1] but that "all his works are truth and his ways are justice."[2] In 7:9 ff. the justice of Yahweh is presented in a picture representing him as sitting in judgment on the beast with eleven horns the last of which has "a mouth speaking great things." The beast is condemned to destruction, and the dominion and glory that it has enjoyed are given to "one like a son of man," who, as is explained in vs. 18, represents "the saints of the Most High." From vs. 27 it appears that by the saints is meant the Jewish people, or the better among them, and from 4:27 that the prime requisites of sainthood would be righteousness and mercy to the poor.

The author of the Book of Daniel teaches that God holds men and nations responsible for their conduct, but he does not attempt to maintain that the good and evil which they experience in this life are an infallible indication of their moral standing. He knows that the righteous sometimes suffer in spite of their righteousness, while the wicked as often prosper in their wickedness. He meets this seeming injustice in the divine government, first, by assigning to suffering a refining and purifying efficacy,[3] and second, by proclaiming a resurrection after which the righteous will enjoy "everlasting life" and the wicked suffer "shame and everlasting contempt."[4] The resurrection promised, to be sure, is not a general release from Sheol, but the

[1] Dan. 4:35.
[2] Dan. 4:37.
[3] Dan. 11:35; 12:10.
[4] Dan. 12:2.

adoption of this restricted doctrine marked an epoch in the history of Hebrew ethics and prepared the way for a more complete relief from the perplexity with which thinking men were haunted so long as they tried to believe that the righteous were rewarded and the wicked punished as they deserved in this life.

The revelation of a future life was a great boon to the Jews from the intellectual standpoint, but it was much more than the solution of a troublesome ethical problem. They were at the time engaged in a life-and-death struggle for their existence as a people. Antiochus Epiphanes had invaded their country, desecrated their temple, and undertaken to impose upon them a foreign religion. Some had submitted, forsaking "the holy covenant" and joining themselves to the heathen.[1] The rest had revolted with Mattathias of Modin, and were now, under his son Judas, fighting for their country and their religion. It was during this remarkable conflict, when the little band of patriots had been further weakened by death and desertion, that the Book of Daniel must have been written. The object of the author evidently was to inspire and encourage his people to continue the struggle. To this end he tells them how steadfastly Daniel and his friends resisted the temptation to disloyalty to which they were exposed. To this end, too, he pictures the passing of the nations, as they are one after another swept from the scene by the mighty hand of Yahweh. Finally, it was the need of an inducement strong enough to make men face almost certain death that forced him to search the future for the promise of another life, a life in which those who

[1] I Macc. 1:15, 43.

offered themselves for their country would be crowned with glory and those who betrayed it would be covered with ignominy; and there can be little doubt that this doctrine had its effect in producing the zeal, and the courage, and the fortitude by which the Jews finally expelled their Syrian oppressors and achieved their independence.

2. ESTHER

The Book of Esther is another product of the late period in which that of Daniel was written, but it is of a very different character. In the first place, while, as has been shown, Daniel is permeated with faith in God and his sovereignty, Esther refers everything that is done, even the deliverance of the Jews from the massacre with which they were threatened, almost entirely to human wit and power. Indeed, throughout the book the divine name is not once mentioned. The dominant figure is the Persian king Ahasuerus, the Xerxes of profane history. He is represented as a despot and sensualist who gives no hint of a recognition of moral responsibility in either his private life or his relations to his subjects. The rest of the characters are the natural product of such a court as he would maintain. Haman is the typical favorite of an oriental monarch, vain, jealous, and unprincipled. Vashti at first makes a favorable impression, but, when one remembers that, in the eyes of the Persians, it would have been perfectly proper for her to appear at the feast given by her husband, it seems probable that the author intended to convey the impression that her refusal to obey the royal summons was dictated, not by modesty or dignity, but by the caprice or wantonness of a spoiled plaything.

There is almost as little to say for the two characters for whom the author evidently expected to obtain the approval of his readers. Mordecai is a sycophant who sacrifices his adopted daughter to royal lust for the sake of improving his position at court, and, when through Esther he has won the vizierate, proves himself hardly less cruel and vindictive than the man he displaced. Finally, Esther herself is not to be commended, even when she is judged by the standard of the Old Testament. There is nothing to indicate that she shrank from paying the price of her cousin's advancement. On the other hand, she did what she could to further his plans, at first by keeping secret her origin,[1] and later, when she was sure of her power over the king, by recognizing him as a kinsman.[2] It was, indeed, brave in her to take her life in her hand and enter the inner court of the king's house without being summoned to an interview; but this act was not worthy of so great praise as it has received, since it was not done on her own initiative or from interest in or sympathy for others, but at Mordecai's urgent command, and only after he had warned her that she herself was in imminent peril and could not hope to escape unless she espoused the cause of her people. If, however, her conduct in this instance can be too highly commended, what shall one say of the proclamation, dictated by Mordecai, in which the Jews were granted permission, not only to defend themselves if attacked, but, turning the tables on their oppressors, to kill and destroy them with their wives and children, and take their goods as booty; and of Esther's reply, when the king told her how many of his people

[1] Esther 2:10, 20. [2] Esther 8:1.

had been slaughtered on the day appointed and asked her what he could still do to please her: "If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews that are in Shushan, to do tomorrow also according to this day's decree, and let Haman's sons be hanged on the gallows"?[1] There are many "hard sayings" in the Old Testament, but for malice and cruelty there is none that is more abhorrent to the humane reader than this heartless petition. Nor is its moral character affected by the fact, now generally recognized, that the Book of Esther is not a historical work, in other words, that Queen Esther is a fictitious character. It still remains true that the personality here portrayed embodies the hatred and revenge with which the Jews of the second century before the Christian era regarded their oppressors, and that the book of which she is the heroine has since that time, through the use made of it in the synagogue, at the feast of Purim, kept alive the bitter memory of their real wrongs and excited jealousy and hostility toward other peoples for which there was often no foundation. It is, of course, idle to attempt to maintain that a book so unprofitable "for instruction in righteousness" is "inspired of God" or deserves the place it occupies among the sacred writings of the Christian church.

[1] Esther 9:13.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The ethical note in the Psalms is unmistakable and persistent. It is prominent in the very first, where the righteous and the wicked are contrasted and their diverse fates clearly distinguished:

> Yahweh regardeth the way of the righteous,
> But the way of the wicked leadeth to destruction.[1]

The righteousness of Yahweh is repeatedly asserted. Not that the adjective "righteous," as applied to him, is of frequent occurrence. It is, however, found in several passages. Thus, it is used as a predicate in 11:7; 119:137; 129:4; and, with the titles "God" and "Judge," in vss. 9 and 11 of Ps. 7. Add the cases in which it is applied to the laws of Yahweh, namely, 119:62, 116, 137, 164, 172. In 11:7 it is said of him, not only that he himself is righteous, but that "he loveth righteousness," and in 97:2 (89:14) that

> Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.[2]

Moreover, the righteousness of Yahweh, besides being an essential feature of his character and government, surpasses in excellence even the comprehension of his creatures. Thus, the author of 36:6 says,

> Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God,
> Thy judgments are a great deep.[3]

Another in 119:142 declares,

> Thy righteousness is forever righteous,

[1] Ps. 1:6.

[2] See also Pss. 9:4; 33:5; 37:28.

[3] See also Ps. 7:19.

by which he means that this attribute in God is an inexhaustible source of righteous activity. The description is completed by 97:6, where one reads that

> Heaven declareth his righteousness,
> And all the peoples have seen his glory.

Reference has already been made to 7:11, where God appears as a judge. His judicial activity is very prominent in the Psalms, and he is represented as exercising it, not only in Jacob,[1] but throughout the earth and among its multitudinous peoples.[2] In Ps. 9 he appears in the act of administering justice among men:

> Yahweh sitteth enthroned forever;
> He hath set up his throne for judgment,
> And he judgeth the world in righteousness,
> Decideth among the nations with equity.[3]

Since Yahweh himself is righteous, and loves righteousness, in his capacity as judge he cannot but render "to every man according as he acteth,"[4] rewarding those that meet the ethical test and punishing those that fail to measure up to its requirements. This thought appears in the Psalms many times and in a great variety of forms. The last verse of the first has already been quoted. The same doctrine is more fully stated in 34:15 f.:

> The eyes of Yahweh are toward the righteous,
> And his ears *inclined* to their cry.
> The face of Yahweh is against evil-doers,
> Cutting off the memory of them from the earth.

See also 11:6 f.; 75:10; 92:7, 12; 125:4 f.; 145:20; 147:6; and, finally, 58:10 f., where the truth the writer

[1] Ps. 99:4.
[2] Ps. 105:7.
[3] Ps. 9:7 f.; see also 67:4.
[4] Ps. 62:12.

wished to teach is marred by the spirit in which it is presented; for this is the passage that reads:

> The righteous will rejoice when he beholdeth vengeance.
> He will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked;
> And men shall say, Surely there is reward for the righteous,
> Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.

The testimony of the Psalms is overwhelmingly to the effect that there is a God, and that he discriminates among his creatures, rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked. There is little evidence of dissent from this belief. Still, there are passages showing that, when they were written, there were some who practically, if not explicitly, rejected it. "The fool," says 14:1 (53:1), "saith in his heart, There is no God." This declaration should probably be interpreted in the light of 10:4, where "There is no God" is the equivalent of "He will not call to account." In other words, the character in question does not question the existence of God, but refuses to believe that the Deity will take note of his conduct, or, if he does, will punish him for any deviation from rectitude.[1]

The author of 94:7 treats the idea suggested as ridiculous.[2] He insists that righteousness will eventually triumph and the upright be content with their choice.[3] There were, however, among the just those who sometimes doubted the current teaching on the subject of retribution. This appears in such appeals as 35:23 ff.; 44:23 ff.; 88:14; 139:19 f.; and the hortatory refrain in Pss. 42 and 43. In Ps. 73 has been preserved what purports to be a record of the experience

[1] See also Pss. 10:13; 36:1; 94:7.

[2] Ps. 94:8 f.

[3] Ps. 94:15.

of one of these righteous souls, an experience that is too natural not to have been shared by many Jews of the post-exilic period. The writer tells how his faith, or that of the class he represents, was shaken, when he "saw the prosperity of the wicked,"[1] who not only had "more than heart could wish,"[2] but reviled God and man.[3] He was almost ready to admit that he had taken useless pains to keep his hands and his heart clean, to say nothing of the trials his faithfulness had cost him,[4] and it was only when he "went to the sanctuary of God, and considered their fate,"[5] took a wider survey of life, that he was able to recover his spiritual footing. It was doubtless the recurrence of such cases that prompted someone whose faith was still undisturbed to undertake a more elaborate defence of the imperiled doctrine. The result was Ps. 37, where the writer repeatedly declares his belief in the ethical character of the divine government. The following are some of the antithetical statements into which he puts his convictions in the matter:

Evil-doers shall be cut off,
But they that wait for Yahweh shall inherit the land.[6]

The arms of the wicked shall be broken,
But Yahweh upholdeth the righteous.[7]

Yahweh regardeth the days of the perfect,
And their inheritance shall be everlasting.[8]

The wicked shall perish,
And the enemies of Yahweh shall be as the fat of lambs.[4]

[1] Ps. 73:2 f.
[2] Ps. 73:7.
[3] Ps. 73:9.
[4] Ps. 73:13 f.
[5] Ps. 73:17.
[6] Ps. 37:9.
[7] Ps. 37:17.
[8] Ps. 37:18.
[9] Ps. 37:20a.

Yahweh loveth justice,
And forsaketh not his saints;
They are preserved forever,
But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.[1]

Wait for Yahweh, and keep his way,
And he will exalt thee to inherit the land:
When the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it.[2]

Preserve integrity and cherish uprightness,
For the peaceable man hath a posterity;
But transgressors shall all be destroyed,
The issue of the wicked shall be cut off.[3]

He puts his personal experience into a corresponding form:

I have been young, and have become old,
Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,
Or his seed begging bread.[4]

I have seen the wicked exultant,
And uplifting himself like a cedar of Lebanon;
But I passed by, and lo, he was gone,
Yea, I sought him, and he was not to be found.[5]

This confession of faith could hardly be made stronger. One cannot, however, read the psalm without being impressed by the difference between it and earlier declarations on the same subject. Its author sees clearly that the righteous sometimes suffer, while the wicked as often escape misfortune; but, instead of protesting, as did Job at the start, and rashly charging God with injustice, or disparaging human virtue, as did Job's friends to the last, to save the credit of the

[1] Ps. 37:28.
[2] Ps. 37:34.
[3] Ps. 37:37 f.
[4] Ps. 37:25.
[5] Ps. 37:35 f.

Almighty, he simply does what Job was finally forced to do, accepts the facts as they present themselves and trusts Yahweh to vindicate his own character. This is the course that he recommends to any who are inclined to worry about the reliability of the moral order:

> Trust in Yahweh and do good;
> Dwell in the land, and cherish faithfulness:
> Yea, take thy delight in Yahweh,
> And he will give thee thy heart's desires.
> Commit to Yahweh thy way,
> Trust also in him, and he will bring to pass:
> He will even bring forth thy righteousness as the light
> And thy justice as the noonday.[1]

There is in this psalm nothing to indicate how long the righteous must wait for Yahweh to reward them and punish those who deserve punishment, but the writer seems to have expected the account to be settled in this life. The author of Ps. 9 represents the Deity as continually exercising his judicial functions with respect to nations as well as individuals. See especially vss. 7 f. In some of the other psalms there are indications of the expectation of what the prophets call "the Day of Yahweh," a date, known only to Yahweh, when the righteous will be delivered, and the wicked, especially foreign enemies, destroyed. This is probably the "judgment" of 1:5. When it comes, according to 7:6–8, Yahweh will reveal himself in all his majesty to the assembled peoples. The righteous, since they were to be vindicated, naturally looked forward to the occasion with eagerness. Hence, it is not surprising to

[1] Ps. 37:3–6.

find that Pss. 96 and 98, which are among the most joyful in the collection, end with the explanatory lines,

> For he cometh to judge the earth:
> He will judge the world in righteousness,
> And the peoples with equity.[1]

There is not, however, in them any trace of the conceit or bitterness by which some of the other psalms are marred. Indeed, in both "all the earth" is invited to take part in the "new song" to Yahweh. In Ps. 149:7 f., on the other hand, the author not only betrays a vengeful spirit, but represents the saints as commissioned by Yahweh

> To wreak vengeance upon the nations,
> Chastisements upon the peoples;
> To bind their kings with chains,
> And their nobles with fetters of iron.

This passage is important, because the fact that the saints execute the "prescribed penalty"[2] with "a two-edged sword"[3] shows that the author had in mind a judgment on the hither side of the grave. There is nowhere in the Psalms proof that the Jews of the period to which they belong followed the wicked beyond the confines of this world. In the case of the righteous it is different. Not that there is much evidence of belief in their future blessedness. Indeed, most of the passages that can be quoted on the subject have a contrary import. The following are especially significant:

> In death there is no remembrance of thee;
> In Sheol who will give thee thanks?[4]

[1] In Ps. 96:13, "in his faithfulness."
[2] Ps. 149:9.
[3] Ps. 149:6.
[4] Ps. 6:5.

What profit is there in my blood when I go down into the pit?
Will the dust praise thee? will it declare thy faithfulness?[1]

Wilt thou do wonders for the dead?
Will the shades arise and praise thee?
Will thy kindness be recounted in the grave,
Thy faithfulness in Abaddon?
Will thy wonders be acknowledged in the darkness,
And thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?[2]

The dead praise not Yahweh,
Neither any that go down into the dust.[3]

Nor can all the passages that have been supposed to teach this doctrine properly be so interpreted. One of them is 16:10 f., which, in the Authorized Version, reads:

Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;
Neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.
Thou wilt show me the path of life:
In thy presence is fulness of joy;
At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

The revised rendering is an improvement. It reads:

Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol;
Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy[4] one to see corruption.
Thou wilt show me the path of life:
In thy presence is fulness of joy;
In thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

This also, however, is unsatisfactory, since it is still possible to understand "leave . . . . to Sheol" as mean-

[1] Ps. 30:9. [2] Ps. 88:10–12. [3] Ps. 115:17.
[4] Margin: "Or, *godly*, Or, *beloved*. Another reading is, *holy ones*."

ing "leave . . . . in Sheol," whereas from vs. 9 it is clear that the proper interpretation is "abandon . . . . to Sheol," that is, permit to die.

A similar case is that of 17:15, which may be translated,

> I myself will behold thy face in righteousness,
> I will sate myself, when I awake, on thy image.

When thus rendered, especially if vs. 13 be taken into account, it becomes clear that the author of the psalm was thinking, not of a future life, but of the next morning and the service at the national sanctuary.

Duhm thinks he finds the doctrine of future blessedness in 39:7; but he can defend this interpretation only by rejecting four verses of the psalm, the last of which, vs. 13, directly contradicts it.

It is not so easy to answer those who find the doctrine in question in Pss. 49 and 73. In vss. 13–15 of the former the fate of the wicked is contrasted with that of the righteous. The passage in its original form probably read about as follows:

> This is the way of those that are foolish,
> And the end of those that are pleased with their lot:
> Like a flock they vanish in Sheol;
> Death feedeth them and ruleth over them;
> Soon their forms moulder,
> Sheol is their abode.
> But God will redeem my soul
> From the power of Sheol, for he will take me.

Perhaps, however, the last line should read,

> From the power of Sheol he will take me.

The author of Ps. 73 dwells, in vss. 23–26, on his hopes as one of God's chosen:

I am continually with thee;
Thou holdest my right hand.
Thou wilt guide me by thy counsel,
And afterward take me to glory.
Whom have I in heaven *besides thee?*
And there is none on earth in whom I delight as in thee.
My flesh and my heart fail,
But God is my portion for ever.

The problem is the same as in Ps. 37—it was inevitable that someone would again attack it—but the result is different; for it seems clear that, in these psalms, while death to the wicked is a penalty for their transgressions, to the righteous it is a translation from a scene of uncertain conditions to a state of undisturbed happiness in the immediate presence of God.[1]

Thus far the terms "righteous" and "righteousness," when applied to God, have had impartial reference to men in general, whether righteous or wicked. There are many passages in which they are used as they are in Isa., chaps. 40–66, to denote his attitude or activity toward his people or any others who need and desire his assistance. In these passages, as one may learn from parallel expressions, they have about the force of "helpful" and "deliverance." The adjective occurs in Ps. 112:4,

There breaketh forth in the darkness a light for the upright,
Gracious, and merciful, and righteous.

See also 116:5,

Gracious is Yahweh and righteous,
Yea, our God is merciful;

[1] Gen. 5:24; I Kings 2:11.

and 145:17,

> Righteous is Yahweh in all his ways,
> And gracious in all his acts.

More frequent is the noun. It is used in appeals for divine aid. Thus, in 4:1 a sufferer prays,

> Answer me when I call,
> O God of my righteousness;

that is, God of my deliverance, or, more freely rendered, God my deliverer.[1] Here belong, also, 88:12,

> Will thy wonders be acknowledged in the darkness?
> And thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

118:19,

> Open to me the gates of righteousness;
> Let me enter them, giving thanks to Yahweh;

and 69:27, where the psalmist, speaking of the wicked, prays,

> Add iniquity to their iniquity,
> And let them not share in thy righteousness.

The next to the last of the passages quoted suggests a second group consisting of those expressing gratitude for deliverance. Thus, 7:17,

> I will give thanks to Yahweh for his righteousness;

and 22:31,

> They shall come and declare his righteousness,

publicly testify to what he has wrought for them.[2]

In the remaining passages in which the saving righteousness of Yahweh finds mention it is simply

[1] See further Pss. 5:8; 31:1; 35:24; 36:10; 71:2; 143:1, 11.

[2] See also Pss. 35:28 (71:24); 40:9, 10; 51:14; 71:15 f.; 89:16; 145:7.

ascribed to him or described in its nature or operation. Thus, 24:5 says of the righteous,

> He shall receive the blessing of Yahweh,
> And righteousness from the God of his salvation,

that is, deliverance from God his Savior; and in 48:10 the poet, addressing Yahweh himself, says,

> Thy right hand is full of righteousness.[1]

The prominence of the ethical element in the Psalms is undeniable. It is never ignored; for, although in 37:31, 103:18, and elsewhere the Law is highly extolled, no encouragement is given to pure ritualism. The only passage in which independent value seems to be attributed to sacrifices is 20:3, where the writer expresses the hope that Yahweh will remember all the offerings and accept all the burnt offerings of the pious prince to whom the psalm is addressed. On the other hand, there are several passages in which the opposite doctrine is strongly enforced. The most important is Ps. 50. In this interesting lyric the subject of sacrifice is first incidentally mentioned in vs. 5, where the "saints" are described as

> Those that have made a covenant with me in sacrifice.

Here, at first sight, sacrifice seems to have an essential importance, but Yahweh, in vss. 7 ff., proceeds to correct any such inference. He tells his people that he really has no need of any of the various animals that they slay at his altar; that a sacrifice of thanksgiving in recognition of the benefits he has bestowed upon

[1] See also Pss. 65:5; 71:19; 85:10, 11, 13; 89:16; 98:2; 103:6, 17; 123:9.

them, without any such symbols, would be much more acceptable. He says,

> Sacrifice to God thanksgiving,
> And pay to the Most High thy vows;
> Then call upon me in the day of trouble,
> And I will rescue thee, since thou hast honored me.[1]

This is entirely in harmony with the teaching of the prophets, who insisted that their people unite moral conduct with their religious observances. The polemic against ritualism appears also in Pss. 50:23; 40:6–10; 43:3 f.; 51:16 f.; 69:30 f.

There is another class of passages in which sacrifices find mention, but in which they are clearly subordinate to, and symbolical of, the sentiment by which they are accompanied. One of them is 4:5,

> Offer a sacrifice of righteousness,

a proper sacrifice,

> And put your trust in Yahweh.

See also 27:6. The closing verses of Ps. 51, which are supposed to be later than the rest, are to be explained in the same way. When the walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt, and the inhabitants wish to show their gratitude, Yahweh will be pleased with the appropriate sacrifices offered at his sanctuary. See also 54:6, correctly rendered,

> Gladly will I sacrifice to thee,
> I will confess that thy name is good.[2]

Finally, in 141:2 a suppliant presents this petition,

> Let my prayer be set forth as incense before thee,
> The uplifting of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

[1] Ps. 50:14 f. [2] See further Pss. 66:13–17; 107:22; 116:17.

Here the symbol fades into a simile, and the sentiment symbolized asserts itself in its essential importance.[1] These passages, and especially the last two, show that the tendency among the psalmists was not toward ritualism, but, as a result of the discipline of the Exile toward a more ethical and spiritual interpretation of their religion.

This tendency shows itself, also, in a term seldom found outside the psalms, and only once[2] in them, of the Deity, which is often (24 times) employed of men instead of the one rendered "righteous," especially where there is a possessive pronoun. In the latter case it is usually translated "saint." It characterizes the spirit rather than the practice of men over against the "kindness" (from the same root) of the Deity toward them, like "devout" or "pious." It is therefore the appropriate word in such passages as 4:3; 16:10; 32:6; 86:2. The last is the familiar one in which occurs the expression rendered in the Authorized Version, "I am holy," and in the Revised, "I am godly." It evidently means "I am devoted" (to thee), as appears from the following line, where the poet calls himself "thy servant that trusteth in thee." Cases in which it has more nearly the sense of "righteous" are 37:28 and 97:10, where it is used in alternation with that word, and 12:1 and 31:23, where it is in parallelism with "faithful."[3] Finally, it is used of the true Israel,[4] those who have covenanted with God in sacrifice,[5] as distinguished from those who disregard his precepts.[6]

[1] See also Ps. 119:108.

[2] Ps. 145:17.

[3] See also Ps. 18:25.

[4] Ps. 148:14.

[5] Ps. 50:2.

[6] Ps. 43:1; and see further, 30:4; 52:8 f.; 79:2; 85:7 f.; 89:19; 116:15; 132:9; 145:10; 149:1, 5, 9.

The discussion has thus far shown that Yahweh is a righteous God, and that he rewards men who are righteous, upright, perfect (after their measure), otherwise known as his saints, and punishes the wicked according to their deserts; but no attempt has been made to define or discover the precise character of the persons included under these contrary categories. It is now necessary to attempt such a definition; in other words, to inquire how far life was moralized by the authors represented in the Book of Psalms. The method hitherto pursued would require a detailed and systematic arrangement of the data collected, but in this instance it will be interesting first to consider briefly some psalms in which something like an ethical program seems to have been attempted. One of them (146) describes the moral perfections of the Creator. He

> Who made heaven and earth,
> The sea, and all that in them is,

is one

> Who keepeth truth for ever;
> Who executeth justice for the oppressed;
> Who giveth bread to the hungry.
> Yahweh looseth the prisoners;
> Yahweh openeth the eyes of the blind;
> Yahweh raiseth them that are bowed down;
> Yahweh loveth the righteous;
> Yahweh watcheth over the sojourners;
> The orphan and the widow he relieveth;
> But the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.[1]

[1] Ps. 146:6 ff.

There are several in which the ideal human character is more or less fully portrayed. The oldest is Ps. 24, where to the question,

> Who shall ascend into the hill of Yahweh?
> And who shall stand in his holy place?

the author makes reply:

> He that hath clean hands and a pure heart;
> Who hath not uplifted his soul to falsehood,
> And hath not sworn deceitfully.
> He shall receive a blessing from Yahwah,
> And deliverance from God his Savior.[1]

The second is similar in form, but goes more into the details of conduct. The question now is,

> Yahweh, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle?
> Who shall dwell in thy holy place?

and the answer:

> He that walketh uprightly and doeth righteousness,
> And speaketh truth in his heart;
> He slandereth not with his tongue,
> Doeth no evil to his neighbor,
> Neither putteth he reproach upon his neighbor;
> In his eyes a reprobate is despised,
> But he honoreth them that fear Yahweh;
> He sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not;
> He putteth not out his money on discount,
> Neither taketh he a bribe against the innocent:
> He that doeth these things shall never be moved.[2]

The psalm that remains to be quoted in this connection is less didactic and more devotional. It is the twenty-sixth, in which the writer, like Job in chap. 31, challenges investigation into his character. He says:

[1] Ps. 24:3–5. [2] Ps. 15:1 ff.

Search me, Yahweh, and prove me;
Try my reins and my heart.
For thy kindness is before my eyes,
And I have walked faithfully with thee.
I have not sat with worthless people:
Nor do I go among dissemblers.
I hate the assembly of evil-doers,
And I do not sit with the wicked.
I wash my hands in innocency,
And compass, Yahweh, thy altar;
Sounding the voice of praise,
And telling all thy wonders.
Yahweh, I love the site of thy house,
And the place where thy glory dwelleth.
Gather not my soul with sinners,
And my life with men of blood;
In whose hands is wickedness,
And whose right hands are full of bribes;
But let me walk in my integrity;
Redeem me and have mercy on me.[1]

There are two or three things to be said concerning these passages. In the first place, it is clear that neither of the last three was intended to be a complete guide to a right life. In the first[2] there is really but one specification, and in the other two, between which there is a pretty close correspondence, only a part of the ethical field is covered. It should be noted, however, that in all of them the writer goes to the root of morality. Thus, 24:4 requires that the man who approaches Yahweh have, not only "clean hands," but a "pure heart," while in 15:2 the righteous man must speak "truth in his heart," and in 26:2 the psalmist invites Yahweh to begin the proposed inquisition with his inmost parts. A third point is that, whereas in Ps. 24

[1] Ps. 26:2 ff. [2] Ps. 24.

the righteous man retains his individuality, in Ps. 15 he identifies himself, over against the reprobate, with those who fear Yahweh, and in Ps. 26 the opposing element has become an "assembly," that is, a party of falsifiers, evildoers, sinners, and even men of blood. These are the "enemies" and "adversaries" of whom many psalms complain that they "hate," and "oppress," and "persecute" the righteous, even God's "saints."[1] In other words, the psalm is one of many in which the Jews after the Exile gave vent to their sorrow and resentment under the pressure of foreign domination or partisan persecution.

The foregoing survey has prepared the way for a more detailed examination of the ethical content of the Psalms. At the outset one is met with a confirmation of the statement already made with reference to the spiritual trend of their teaching, in that one of the most conspicuous of the virtues they recommend is meekness or humility. Indeed, so admirable was this quality in the eyes of the godly men by whom the Psalms were written, that in 45:4 it forms a trinity with faithfulness (truth) and righteousness,[2] and several times the term "meek" is used like "righteous," "upright," etc., of the godly in distinction from the wicked, who are also called "the proud." Good illustrations of this usage are 37:10 f.:

> Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be;
> Yea, thou shalt examine the place where he was, and he will be gone;
> But the meek shall inherit the land,
> And delight themselves in abundant prosperity;

[1] Pss. 17:8 f.; 25:19; 38:19; 71:11.

[2] The Hebrew text is doubtful; but this is the interpretation of the English translators, and it has the support of the great ancient versions.

36:11,

> Let not the proud foot reach me;
> Or the hand of the wicked drive me away;

and 18:27 in its original form,

> A humble people thou wilt save,
> But haughty eyes thou wilt abase.[1]

The importance given to humility as a virtue, and pride as a defect, in the Psalms is noteworthy; not less so the almost entire absence of references to personal habits elsewhere condemned. For example, there seems to be but one passage, 69:12, and that not directly condemnatory, on the abuse of intoxicating drinks, and this is somewhat weakened by 104:15, where wine is an acknowledged blessing.

There is equal reticence on the part of the psalmists with reference to the requirements of domestic ethics. In 50:18 the wicked are accused of being partakers with adulterers, but on the subject of the relation between parents and children, etc., there is only the indirect light that comes from such passages as 27:10; 103:13; 127:3; 128:3; 69:8; 123:2.

In the field of social ethics there is more material; yet not as much as might have been expected; for, although the Psalms abound in praise for those who observe, and blame for those who neglect, their duties

[1] On the meek, see further Pss. 10:17; 22:26; 25:9; 34:2; 69:32; 72:9; 147:6; 149:4; on the proud, 5:5; 10:2; 17:10; 31:18, 23; 59:12; 73:3, 6, 8; 75:4; 86:14; 94:2, 4; 101:5; 119:5, 69; 123:4; 138:6; 140:5. There are a number of passages in which, although the present reading is "the nations," there is ground for suspecting that the original text had "the proud." See 9:5, 15, 17, 19, 20, where Duhm substitutes the latter for the former; also 10:16; 59:5, 8.

to their fellows, there is rather a dearth of particulars. Here, as in most of the other books of the Old Testament, justice is highly commended and injustice as strongly condemned. In 106:3 a blessing is promised them that "observe justice" and "do righteousness at all times," and the author of 119:21 claims the divine blessing because he has "done justice and righteousness." This virtue is required especially of kings and all others in power and authority. The ruler of Ps. 45 is credited with it, and assured that, because he has it, his "throne will be for ever and ever."[1]

Over against the just stands the numerous class of "men of violence." The term "violence," to judge from 140:1 ff., covers any form of personal attack, but in 54:3 the violent man is one who has sought after the soul of the writer, that is, made an attempt upon his life. Nor is this the only case of the kind. There are numerous passages showing that, during the period most prolific of psalms, the "violence and strife in the city" often took this form. The wicked are accused of seeking to slay the righteous in 7:2; 27:2; 31:13; 35:4; 37:14, 32; 38:12; 40:14; 54:3; 56:1 f., 6; 57:3; 62:3; 63:9; 70:2; 71:10; 86:14; 94:6; 109:16; 119:95; and in 10:8; 14:4 (53:4); 94:6 of having accomplished their purpose. Therefore they are called "men of blood."[2] In 44:22 and 79:2 f., 10 it is foreign enemies by whom the saints are treated like "sheep for the slaughter" and their flesh given to "the beasts of the earth."[3]

[1] Ps. 45:6. See also 72:1 ff.

[2] Pss. 5:6; 26:9; 55:23; 59:2; 139:19.

[3] See also Ps. 83:2.

The "violence" of the Psalms did not always take the form of actual, perhaps not of intended, murder. There is a series of passages that indicate the prevalence of oppression, or the subjection of one person, or class of persons, to the real or fancied advantage of another. It is, of course, the wicked who are the oppressors[1] and the poor and helpless or the righteous who are their victims.[2] The psalmist pleads for the correction of the wrongs of which he complains, and declares his faith in Yahweh as a savior, or rejoices in the results of divine intervention.[3]

In another series of passages the violence of the wicked is of the nature of persecution, or the persistent harassment of one person or class of persons by another. The Hebrew word most frequently used to describe this kind of hostility is the one meaning "pursue,"[4] for which 10:2 has one *dalaḳ*[5] rendered "hotly pursue," that is, chase, as one hunts game. In other cases the psalmist represents himself as surrounded by his enemies[6] and harassed as by archers,[7] bees,[8] or even savage beasts, bulls of Bashan,[9] dogs,[10] or lions.[11] He entreats Yahweh to deliver him and punish his persecutors, because he has done nothing to warrant their hostility.[12]

The Psalms condemn violence, not only when it is directed against the person, but also when the property

[1] Pss. 10:7; 17:9; 73:8; 89:22; 94:5.

[2] Pss. 10:18; 12:5; 72:4, 14; 74:21.

[3] Pss. 9:13; 25:16; 31:7; 42:9; 43:2; 62:10; 103:6; 119:121 f.

[4] *Radhaph:* Pss. 69:26; 119:86, 157, 161; 142:6; 143:3.

[5] *dalaḳ*

[6] Ps. 109:3.

[7] Ps. 11:2.

[8] Ps. 118:12.

[9] Ps. 22:12.

[10] Ps. 22:16, 20.

[11] Pss. 22:21; 35:17.

[12] Pss. 35:7 f.; 109:3 ff.; etc.

of another is affected, as in theft[1] and robbery.[2] Sometimes, it appears, the wicked, shrinking from such rough methods, accomplished their purpose by borrowing and not returning the thing or things that they coveted.[3]

It is not strange that violence should have been common in the period during which most of the psalms were written, or that it should have been condemned by the authors of these compositions. With falsehood the case is somewhat different. It, too, was a natural product of the period, but it had not always, and in all its forms, found disapproval among the Hebrews. There is no prominence given to it by the prophets in the list of offenses against which they inveigh. In the Psalms, on the other hand, it is the offense of which there is most frequent complaint and most severe criticism. Before citing, however, the numerous passages in which the psalmists give vent to their disapproval of falsehood, it will be best to note their attitude toward its opposite, truth, which, as has been shown, means trustworthiness in the broadest sense. It is one of the attributes of Yahweh, and indeed one to which almost as much importance is assigned as to his kindness or his righteousness. Thus, in 31:5 he is called a "God of truth," which means that he is not only the true but the faithful God. His faithfulness is the reliance of his people,[4] and that "to all generations."[5] It is coupled with his justice, righteousness, or uprightness in 96:13; 111:7 f.; 119:75, 138; 143:1;

[1] Ps. 50:18.
[2] Pss. 10:3; 35:10.
[3] Ps. 37:21.
[4] Ps. 91:4.
[5] Pss. 91:4; 119:90; 146:6; also 30:9; 69:13; 71:22; 89:8; 132:11.

but more frequently with his kindness, as in 25:10; 40:10 f.; 57:10; 86:15; 89:1 f., 24, 33, 50; 92:2; 98:3; 100:5; 115:1; 117:2. In 36:5 f. occurs the fourfold ascription,

> Thy kindness, O Yahweh, reacheth to the clouds,
> Thy faithfulness to the sky;
> Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God,
> Thy judgments are a great deep;

and in 89:14,

> Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne,
> Kindness and faithfulness go before thee.

The Law of God, because it comes from him, is also trustworthy.[1]

Yahweh, being what he is, requires that man be true in his heart and life.[2] The religious life, therefore, is put into terms of faithfulness. So in 37:3 f.:

> Trust in Yahweh and do good;
> Dwell in the land and cherish faithfulness;
> Yea, take thy delight in Yahweh,
> And he will give thee thy heart's desires.

The same thought is more subtly expressed in 85:10 f., which may be rendered:

> Kindness and faithfulness shall meet each other,
> Righteousness and prosperity kiss each other.
> Faithfulness shall spring from the earth,
> And righteousness look down from heaven.

Here the "kindness" is that of Yahweh, and the "righteousness" his gracious assistance, while the "faithfulness" is that of man, and the "prosperity" the reward

[1] Pss. 25:5; 26:3; 43:3; 119:30, 86, 142, 151, 160.

[2] Pss. 32:2; 51:6.

of his loyalty. The righteous man, according to 15:2–4, it will be remembered, is one

> That speaketh truth in his heart;
> That slandereth not with his tongue;
> That sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not.

There were evidently many, when this and other psalms were composed, who fell far below the standard of trustworthiness here presented. The author of Ps. 52 thus arraigns one of his contemporaries:

> Thy tongue deviseth destruction,
> Like a sharpened razor, deceiver.
> Thou lovest evil more than good,
> Falsehood more than righteous speech.
> Thou lovest all destructive words,
> Thou deceitful tongue.[1]

The proper punishment for lying is prescribed in 120:3 f.:

> What shall be given to thee, and what added,
> Thou deceitful tongue?
> Arrows of a warrior, sharp ones,
> With coals from retem![2]

In the following passages the form of falsehood condemned is that of false testimony, or slander: 27:12; 50:20; 101:5; 119:69. More significant are those in which the charge is that of treachery, since they reflect the methods of partisan strife. Thus, in Ps. 5:9 the author says of his enemies:

> There is no trustworthiness in their mouths;
> Inwardly they would destroy.
> Their hearts are open sepulchers,
> Although they talk smoothly.

[1] Ps. 52:2 ff. See also Pss. 10:7; 35:20; 36:3; 50:19; 59:12; 109:2.

[2] See also Pss. 5:6; 31:18; 63:11; 101:7; 109:2.

In Ps. 55 the traitor is a former friend, with whom the poet "took sweet counsel" as they "walked to the house of God."[1] But

> He stretched forth his hand against his friends,
> He violated his covenant.
> His mouth was smoother than butter,
> But in his heart there was war;
> His words were softer than oil,
> But they were drawn swords.[2]

See further, for examples of duplicity: 12:2; 26:4; 28:3; 41:6; 62:4; 144:8, 11; perhaps also 38:12. In 25:3; 59:6; 119:158 it is apostates from Yahweh to whom the psalmist refers.

At first sight a good deal of consideration seems to be given to the unfortunate as a class in the Psalms, but this is not really the case, the fact being that the adjectives "poor" (*'ani*), "needy" (*'ebhyon*), and "helpless" (*dal*) generally denote the class of persons who are otherwise called "the righteous," etc. This is clear from a number of passages in which the two sets of terms are used interchangeably. Thus, in 14:5 f. "poor" and "righteous" are practically synonyms, while in 40:12 f. there are two pairs of equivalents:

> I know that Yahweh will maintain the cause of the poor,
> Justice for the needy.
> Surely the righteous shall praise thy name,
> The upright shall dwell in thy presence.

Other similar passages are 22:24; 34:6 f.; 68:9 f.; 69:32 f.; 72:12; 74:19; 86:1 f. Still more convincing are such passages as 37:14, where the poor and needy

[1] Ps. 55:14. [2] Ps. 55:20 f.

are identified with the upright and set over against the wicked:

> The wicked have drawn the sword and bent their bow
> To cast down the poor and needy,
> To slay the upright in their way.[1]

Having learned from the passages cited that the stricter Jews called themselves "the poor," etc., one has no difficulty in finding numerous other examples of the same usage; namely, in a class in which the persons so designated appear in more or less close connection with the wicked[2] and a few in which there is apparently no such connection.[3]

It is clear from the above showing that the psalmists had no lack of sympathy with misfortune, but the thoughtful reader will suspect that they expended it largely on themselves. This suspicion is confirmed by the paucity of references to any of the classes of unfortunates in whom the prophets were interested. The truth is that the widow, as an object of charity, is mentioned in the Psalms but three times, the orphan six, and the stranger only twice, and that in seven of these eleven instances[4] it is divine and not human charity that is celebrated, and the other four are contained in two complaints against recreant judges[5] and

[1] This passage will serve equally well as an illustration, even if, as Duhm and others contend, the latter half of the first and the whole of the second line are an addition to the original text. See also Pss. 40:15 ff.; 69:28 f.; 70:2 ff.; 107:41 f.

[2] Pss. 9:17 f.; 10:2, 9; 12:5; 18:27; 35:10; 72:4, 12–14; 109:16 20–22, 31.

[3] Pss. 74:21; 113:7.

[4] Pss. 10:14, 18; 68:5; 146:9.

[5] Ps. 82:3.

"the proud"[1] in the community. There are also very few passages in which the poor as such receive consideration. Of these 41:1 is of a general character. The rest relate to the relief of the needy, 15:5 forbidding discount, and 37:21, 26 and 112:5 commending the man who gladly lends, or better, gives of his substance to the impoverished. To such a man, says 18:25, Yahweh will reveal himself in all his kindness.

The dearth of genuine charity in the Psalms is not more noticeable than the frequency of the manifestation of a vengeful spirit. The cruelty of some of these passages makes the modern reader shudder. One of them is 35:4:

> May they be disappointed and humiliated
> That seek after my soul;
> Let them be turned backward and confounded
> That devise evil against me.[2]

This is very brief and simple compared with the imprecation in 69:22 ff.:

> Let their table before them be a snare,
> And their peace offerings a trap.
> Let their eyes be darkened that they cannot see,
> And smite their loins with continuous tottering.
> Pour out upon them thy anger,
> And let the fury of thy wrath overtake them.
> May their camp be desolate,
> And no one dwell in their tents.
> Add iniquity to their iniquity,
> And let them not share thy deliverance.
> Let them be blotted out of the book of life,
> And not be inscribed among the righteous.

[1] Ps. 94:6.

[2] See also Pss. 35:6; 40:14 f.; 70:2 f.; 71:13.

The language here used is cruel and vindictive in the extreme; yet this fact has not prevented the theologians of the past from putting it into the mouth of Jesus, who, in his life and in his death, taught and practiced the forgiveness of enemies.[1] For other examples of imprecation in the Psalms, see 5:10; 68:1 f.; 79:12; 83:13; 109:6; 140:9 f.

These are but specimens. There are many more that fall far below the Christian standard of morality. There is, however, another class of passages that are still more objectionable; namely, those in which the psalmists give way to an almost fiendish exultation over the fate of their enemies. A good example is 58:10:

> The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance;
> He shall bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked;

from which it is evident that, when it was written, at least to the writer, the terms "righteous" and "wicked" had become little more than designations for hostile parties, without ethical significance. Here belong 137:8 f.:

> Daughter of Babylon, destined to destruction,
> Happy he that rewardeth thee as thou has served us!
> Happy he that seizeth thy children
> And dasheth them against a rock!

a passage that has always been a stumbling-block to the thoughtful reader of the Hebrew Scriptures.[2] It should, however, be borne in mind that such passages are all of the nature of temporary ebullitions of passion,

[1] Luke 23:34.

[2] See further Pss. 41:10; 59:10; 68:22 f.; 92:11; 149:6 ff.

and therefore do not represent the deliberate judgment or conviction of the post-exilic Jews. Cf. Job 31:29,

> If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me,
> Or exulted when evil befell him, etc.[1]

The last passage quoted from the Psalms, 137:8 f., is one of many that deal with foreigners. It is very hostile to the Babylonians, reflecting the bitterness produced by the subjugation of Judah and the deportation of the better part of its inhabitants. The preceding verses show how deeply the Jews resented the attitude of the Edomites in that desperate crisis. Pss. 79 and 83 are of a much later date, having for their background, apparently, an early stage of the Maccabean struggle.[2] It was the cruelty of the king of Syria and his agents that wrung from the Jews such appeals as Ps. 79:12,

> Render to our neighbors sevenfold in their bosoms
> The reproach wherewith they have reproached thee, O Yahweh!

and 83:13–15:

> O my God, make them like the whirling weed,
> Like stubble before the wind.
> Like the fire that burneth the forest,
> And the flame that setteth the mountains ablaze,
> So pursue thou them in thy tempest,
> And terrify them with thy storm-wind.[3]

In none of the psalms thus far cited is there any indication of interest in the future of the Gentiles; for in 83:16 ff., although they learn, they are destined

[1] See also Prov. 20:22; 24:29; 25:21 f.

[2] I Macc. 1:20 ff.; 5:1 ff.; 7:17.

[3] See further Pss. 89:50 f.; 118:10; 149:7 ff. On 9:5, 15, 17, 19, 20; 10:16; 59:5, 8, see p. 393, n.

to perish in learning, that Yahweh is "the Most High over all the earth." There are, however, other psalms which teach that his gracious purpose includes all nations. In the first place, they declare that he alone created all the sons of men,[1] and his rule extends over the whole earth.[2] His eyes keep watch upon them,[3] and he holds them responsible for their actions, whether they are good or evil.[4]

Secondly, there is a series of passages which teach that Yahweh is not indifferent to the attitude of the nations toward him. This is clear from his efforts to make them acquainted with his works and ways. In 7:8 the Psalmist asks that they may be witnesses to his vindication. Elsewhere they are represented as witnesses of the divine glory[5] or recipients of the testimony of others with reference to it.[6]

The end sought in thus displaying or celebrating the works of Yahweh here, as in the other books of the Old Testament, is to secure the attention of the peoples and their recognition of him as the only God.[7] In 96:7 ff. they are directly exhorted to "ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength," "bring an offering," and "worship him in holy array" at his sanctuary.[8] The psalmists repeatedly voice the expectation that this end will be attained. Thus, in 22:27 one says that

> All the ends of the earth shall remember and return to Yahweh,
> And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him;

[1] Ps. 33:15.
[2] Pss. 47:8; 66:7; 99:1; 103:19.
[3] Ps. 66:7.
[4] Ps. 96:10, 13; 98:9.
[5] Pss. 77:14; 97:6; 98:2.
[6] Pss. 9:11; 49:1; 57:9; 96:3, 10; 105:1; 108:3.
[7] Pss. 66:3 f.; 67:2 ff.
[8] See also Pss. 66:8; 68:32, 34; 117:1.

and in 68:31, the meaning of which is clear, although the text is doubtful, that

> They shall come in haste from Egypt,
> Ethiopia shall eagerly bring gifts to God.[1]

It remains to consider the relation between the Jews and the Gentiles when the latter finally recognize Yahweh as the one God. In 47:9 the original reads, literally,

> The princes of the peoples are gathered,
> The people of the God of Abraham.

The Authorized Version changes "peoples" to "people" in the first line and renders the second,

> *Even* the people of the God of Abraham.

The Revisers have restored the plural "peoples," and given to the whole a new interpretation by substituting "*to be*" for "*even*." If, however, liberties are to be taken with the passage, it is better, with Olshausen, to supply "with," the Hebrew equivalent of which has the same consonants as that of "people," and may easily have been overlooked by a copyist. Duhm adopts this emendation and remarks that "here the heathen nobles appear as in some respects the equals of the people of Jahweh." The saving phrase, "in some respects," was wisely chosen, for it is clear from vs. 3 of the same psalm, which Duhm emends so as to make it read, not

> He subdueth peoples under us,
> And nations under our feet;

but,

> He subdueth peoples under him,
> And nations under his feet;

[1] See further Pss. 68:29; 82:8; 86:9; 102:15, 22; 138:4 f.

that the author was not a universalist to the extent of admitting the Gentiles to complete equality with the children of Abraham. If it be objected, as it is by Duhm, that this interpretation is inconsistent with itself, it is only necessary to reply that in all the passages bearing on the point in question the psalmists agree with vs. 3 in teaching more or less clearly the primacy of their own people in the sight of Yahweh. Thus, in 2:8 Yahweh says to the messianic king,

> Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thy inheritance,
> And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;

and in 72:9 the author prophesies with reference to the same august person that

> All kings shall fall down before him,
> All rulers shall serve him.[1]

[1] See also Pss. 18:43 ff.; 60:6 ff.; 110:6.

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